




E12974

A decorative rectangular border with ornate, symmetrical scrollwork and floral motifs at the corners and midpoints.

**MOOKHTAR-OOL-MOOLK**

*Sir Salar Jung Bahadoor G. C. S. I.*





ADVENTURES

AND

TRAVELS

OF

IDA, COUNTESS HAHN-HAHN,

IN TURKEY, EGYPT, THE HOLY LAND,

&c

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

*Second Edition.*

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER



## TO MY MOTHER.

My dearest mother, here are now all my Letters in a collective form, and I dedicate them to you, because I know that to *you* they will give most pleasure. Besides, you are so accustomed to have occasion to be indulgent with me, that you will the more readily overlook the manifold imperfections, contradictions and inconsistencies, which are inseparable from such a series of Letters; and this idea is very gratifying to me. For, though I am ready to admit that there are a thousand imperfections in mine, still I must extend some protection to the apparent contradictions and inconsistencies; for, in fact, they are but apparent. On Monday, I saw a thing on one side and wrote to you about it; on Wednesday I observed it on another, and gave you my further remarks. Explanations, supplements, which you would like to have at first, you find perhaps ten Letters off—perhaps not at all,



when I thought no more of the subject; a circumstance very likely to happen on a journey abounding in new and strange impressions. Repetitions, too, sometimes occur: for instance, I advert rather frequently to the stars and to the air; but they are favourites with me, and make me happy, so have mercy upon them!—But I ask no mercy for having on every occasion declared my faith, my convictions, my opinions, with perfect sincerity, without reserve or disguise; for though you are the only person in the wide world for whom I feel an awe, yet you have always suffered me to take my own ways, distant and different as they may be from yours, and granted me the free development of my faculties, the results of which are my faith and my opinions.

I am sorry that there is nothing concerning Greece for you. But I had no spirit for writing in that unfortunate country; I felt the strait-waistcoat forced upon it in the new constitution. It is an absurdity to have the form, and not the essence. In a country where feudal—aristocratic—one cannot say institutions, but—sentiments bear sway, where the Klephts blindly adhere to, follow, trust, and obey the Colocotroni, Eubœa, the Griziotti, the Mainottis, the Mauromichali, and him *alone*—there, of course, they are the only representatives of the people.

I cannot sufficiently repeat to you how far the difficulties, dangers, disappointments and annoyances of this tour have fallen short of my expectation. I cannot forbear laughing to be everywhere received like one risen from the dead, to be questioned concerning extraordinary perils, which I never encountered, and to find the courage admired which I never had occasion to display. Neither accidents, nor troubles, nor illness, have befallen us—sometimes vexations and annoyances, such as sluggish people, vermin, and riding on camels through the Desert; but vexations are met with everywhere. Fear I have never felt for a moment, still less experienced the momentary desperation which causes us to exclaim, “Would that I had not undertaken it!” In the whole affair, I found but one difficulty—that was to make up my mind to travel. My excellent health afterwards rendered every thing easy: that is the grand requisite. The choice of the proper season is the second: October and November for Syria, between the summer-heat and the winter-rains; and the winter months for Egypt, before the plague and the wind of the Desert (chamsin) prevail.

So much, however, I must add; whoever regards travelling as a superficial amusement, let him not go to the East. Pleasures it offers none, only lessons and revelations. This I anticipated—them I

sought and found, and therefore I am perfectly content with my tour, only indeed after my own way and manner—without ecstasy, without exaggeration.

My beloved mother, if these Letters should cause you to pass a few agreeable hours, how delighted shall I be !

IDA.

LETTERS

OF

A GERMAN COUNTESS.

---

LETTER I.

TO MY MOTHER.

Breslau—Silesia—Aspect of the Country—Bathing-places and their Environs—The Schneekoppe—The County of Glatz—Scenery and Baths—The Heuscheuer.

Vienna, August 8, 1843.

CONSTANTINOPLE cannot be reached with three steps, my dearest mother. Many thousand must be taken; and if the traveller is of a loquacious disposition, he cannot help talking about them. These ante-oriental letters you must consider as a prelude to the real drama; they form an introduction to the more interesting; and if the subject makes them appear to you somewhat common-place, only wait a little; they will become foreign enough, it is to be hoped, by and by.

As it is natural to me to be always engrossed in the present, when it is not absolutely destitute

of attraction, I derived great pleasure from the little tour through Silesia, and contemplated its blue mountains with as much delight as if there were no Alps and Sierras in my remembrance, and no Olympus and Lebanon in my hope. Six years ago, I ran over Silesia in seven-league boots, at such a rate that I slept but one night in Breslau, and saw nothing there but the Town-House. This Town-House pleased me so exceedingly, half fantastic, half clumsy, as it is, with its turrets, and its salient parts, and its sculpture, and overgrown with wild vines, that the whole city was invested by my imagination with the same kind of character, and I fancied that there must be something extraordinary to be seen, if not in, at least about it—like Prague, for instance, or Nürnberg, where you walk through the streets, and look right and left, and find abundant entertainment.

Such towns really appear to me like organic formations, which, springing up as a flower does from a seed, could not but thrive on this soil. Breslau, it is true, is less so: it is gradually assuming a modern aspect; the houses are gradually beautifying, and the streets extending themselves: it has not retained so much that is characteristic of ancient as to interest modern times. It has a very commercial look, and, in the inscriptions over the shops, Polish is found mixed with German. In the streets we also heard Polish spoken; and the inns were full of Poles, on their way to the baths. Few other

foreigners come to Breslau, the great majority of travellers, native and foreign, proceeding to the south and the west.

It has stately, solemn-looking churches, befitting the residence of a prince-bishop; and in the Augustine church of the Blessed Virgin on the Sands—the name is as long as that of a Spanish grandee—there are in the aisles some most singular arched roofs, displaying consummate art, though appearing incomplete. But no Albert Durer, no Peter Vischer adorned the austere edifices with the lovely creations of their art—of that old honest art, which affects and warms my heart like, the sight of a friend.

Modern art has found its place, where, as it is not uncommon now-a-days, it appears associated with industry. In Karsch's Museum, painting, bookbinders' work, engraving, knick-knacks of bronze, lithographic productions, are arranged side by side; and I must confess that of all these things the specimens of bookbinding pleased me most. The lithograph of the Madonna Sistina is an absolute disgrace to art, and doubly striking in this Museum, because it possesses a fine impression of Müller's engraving of the same picture—that engraving which I can never behold without a feeling of melancholy; for no sooner was the plate finished, than the mental powers of the poor artist were exhausted, and the gloom of insanity enshrouded that spirit, which had been so long, so deeply, so

entirely absorbed in the holiest, the highest beauty—a hard lot for such transcendent talent!

Several of the Silesian nobility and gentry have houses at Breslau, but they are not externally distinguished by any particular beauty. Neither did the *laquais de place* know of any works of art, which I took it for granted they must contain. Indeed, it is better to have nothing of the kind than only middling productions; and it is difficult for private persons to attain higher, since princes have at their command greater resources for securing what is excellent for their collections. In a rather old private house, there is on the ceiling of a large room a remarkable alto relievo, an equestrian figure of Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, of stone, or some substance resembling stone, in which iron bars are inserted, of beautiful workmanship, and, though upwards of two hundred years old, in excellent preservation. Basso-relievos of military subjects run along the frieze, but are not equal in merit to that extraordinary work. This apartment is said to have been formerly a Protestant chapel.

At present, not more than two of the numerous churches in Breslau belong to the Protestants. The lofty steeple of one of these, the church of St. Elizabeth, I should have liked to ascend, but the wind was too violent. During the three weeks that I was in Silesia, I had certainly, at most, not above three hours of calm weather, and this, in the midst of summer and at such a distance from the sea,

is very extraordinary. I should imagine that this is the only way in which Rübezahl now manifests his presence. People have ceased to give credit to his other pranks ; this enrages him, and he ranges over his mountains in a fury that produces storms and tempests. I would fain have made acquaintance with the humorous old gentleman in some other way ; but he deemed me unworthy of it.

Though my journey was, in consequence, performed in wretched weather, so that not a day passed without several heavy showers, and at Warmbrunn I was kept prisoner some days by the rain, still the country has made an agreeable impression upon me, because it is so populous and cheerful. How completely is Silesia cut off from the New Mark !—not by rivers, mountains, language ; but by its character, its nature. It is cultivated and planted in a different manner ; has vineyards—the famous Grünberg grape—walnut-trees, and all the roads are lined with fruit-trees, particularly the cherry, so that dull alleys of poplars are not to be seen. Poplars are handsome in gardens, overtopping groups of other trees, as steeples do houses ; but their spare beauty is too meagre to adorn a landscape. The cherry-tree cuts a very different figure, fresh, full, and luxuriant. To me, who always think cherries as beautiful as rubies, it was a magnificent sight ; but, as I should not eat them any more than rubies, so cold and heavy do I find them, the idea who was to consume all these cherries gave me no



small uneasiness. That they were likely, however, to find but too many admirers was demonstrated by the small boarded sheds here and there along the road, in which hired watchmen looked out as vigilantly for pilferers as those in the vineyards before the vintage.

The fields were of a golden yellow, the heavy ears undulating like waves; the harvest had commenced, and the mowers merrily whetted their scythes. Scattered among the fields, and so numerous that the landscape never appears of one uniform colour, are large villages, sometimes with handsome villas and mansions, which are never without a spacious garden, and many towns. Cross and by-roads run from all these places to the others, and also between the alleys of fruit-trees. The towns look more cheerful and are better built than small country towns in general are; and the villages are adorned with such a profusion of flowers as I have never before seen in the country; lilies and roses in the greatest abundance, and standard rose-trees, which are accounted something rare in North Germany, appear in front of the meanest cottages; honeysuckle and convolvulus creep around the windows, the frames of which are generally painted green or blue; and hedges of spiræa enclose the garden, which, be it ever so small, is sure to contain a mass of poppies of different colours, scarlet lychnis, and all the flaring flowers that bloom in the height of summer. Thanks to the frequent rain, not a

withered leaf or a dry stalk was to be seen ; and whenever the sun burst forth from amid the clouds, everything met him glistening, glowing, and flinging perfume around.

Such is the country in the plain between Breslau and the mountains, and, the nearer to these, the richer, the more beautiful, and the more diversified ; for there the valleys run down from the mountains, between ranges of hills, into the plain ; a stream winds through them, and strives to reach the Oder ; and the windings of this stream are lined with villages, and where one village ends another begins. Or the hills stretch like long arms into the country, and thereby cut out for themselves a larger, deeper, valley, which again parts into several divisions. Thus the charming valley of Hirschberg, or of Warmbrunn, one of the most delightful in Germany, at the foot of the Giant Mountains, ten miles in length and breadth, is a real park ; but in such a way as to detract from the beauty of the actual parks formed in it, though not of the country. This valley, indeed, is the crown-jewel ; as I must confess that it is only the portion of the Giant Mountains from Schmiedeberg to Hirschberg that I find really mountainous. There the long blue outstretched range every where forms the beautiful, solid background, to which the eye gradually rises from the plain, over hills, over spurs of mountains, as upon irregular terraces, and seeks the Schneekoppe, whose summit is frequently enveloped in clouds.

We were first in the Sudetes, at the small bathing places, Charlottenbrunn and Altwasser, and at Salzbrunn, which is larger and better known. To the remarkable objects and the riches of that country belong most particularly the coal-pits; but they do not contribute to its embellishment. They are mostly elevated plains, completely undermined, and rather bare, to which you ascend through some picturesque ravine, in which a little stream suddenly rends a deep narrow channel—a cleft, I might call it, like those defiles of Liebethal, and Ottowald, through which you enter Saxon Switzerland.

Nearly of this nature is the Höllengrund, near Fürstenstein, between two and three miles from Salzbrunn. This castle rises on the one side abruptly from the precipice, while on the other it is situated absolutely in the plain, which here has a certain naked and uncultivated appearance, owing to the coal-pits. In my opinion, the Castle of Fürstenstein has a higher reputation than it deserves. Me, at least, it has not surprised, either by picturesque or by original beauty: on the other hand, there was something that far surpassed my expectation; this was the rocks of Adersbach. They are situated beyond the Silesian frontiers, in Bohemia, eighteen miles from Salzbrunn, and a wretched road leads to them. It rained in torrents, and I considered seriously whether I had not better give up the trip; for I had heard so much about

the rocks of Adersbach that it seemed as if I knew them. Luckily my curiosity proved too strong ; and the result showed that bad weather detracts nothing whatever from these remarkable rocks. In all other mountain scenery, more or less depends upon favourable light, but in this case nothing at all. Here you advance in so narrow a labyrinth of paths and ravines, here the extraordinary formations approach so near to you, that rain or sunshine makes no difference. All these rocks, some of which rise to the height of two hundred and fifty feet, stand upon their smallest base, some singly, some in groups, on a marshy meadow ground, elevated above the surface by a caprice of Nature, and rent from the body of the hill ; for there are hills enough round about, but their blocks are piled *upon* one another. Here it appears as though mountain spirits had been attempting with rude hands to copy the forms and works of men, and, dissatisfied with their clumsy and colossal imitations, had flung them down by one another, and half buried them in the swamp. So fantastic and to a certain degree, so like are these forms, that you are disposed to believe the guide, when he points out to you, with the gravest look in the world, here the twins, there the mummy, there the veiled nun, there St. John in the wilderness—“that little man up yonder between the stones,” he adds, for your better information. Upon the designations, fortress, market-place, cathedral, &c., you

hit of yourself; but with deep shame I confess that it was impossible for me to recognize the "Breslau wool-fair."

The way through this world of rocks is sometimes extremely narrow, at others it expands into a wider space; in some places the sides are so close that you are obliged to squeeze and stoop to get along. Wooden steps facilitate climbing wherever it is necessary. The most striking point of the labyrinth is the grotto with the water-fall. The bright, cheerful, ever-moving stream suddenly tumbles all afrighted into the dark cellar-like grotto, and thence winds in a thousand toilsome meanders round the foot of the rocks into the open country. On the level plain, a few hundred paces from the entrance, at which the "overturned sugar-loaf" keeps guard, stands the public house. The landlord, who keeps the rocky ways in order, expects a trifle for his pains, but considerably more for the dinner which it is customary to take at his house, and which is not likely to be very palatable, if you neglect to order trout. This I never forget to do among the mountains; and this is particularly to be recommended in Silesia, for the refinements of cookery have not yet penetrated into the kitchens of that country; nay, their precursor, cleanliness, is not everywhere to be found; and therefore the simplest dishes, such as trout, eggs, potatoes, were to me the most welcome.

When you have seen Adersbach and Fürstenstein

you are very glad that you can leave Salzbrunn. The gardens surrounding the drinking room are it is true very pleasing, especially for their profusion of roses; but you have strolled through them in a quarter of an hour, and the place itself is not pleasant. An endless, mean, thoroughly rustic village, in the middle of which, like the heart, is that building supported by pillars, which covers the wells, the drinkers, and likewise the shops. Some hotels and lodging-houses surround this edifice, so that just this spot has a rather gaudy appearance, which is not exactly becoming in a country beauty. There is very little bathing, so little that the keeper looked quite disconcerted when, about eight o'clock in the evening, I wished to take a bath. Of course I desisted from the unreasonable desire, when she enumerated all the obstacles to its fulfilment; but I could not help smiling at the idea that I was in a bathing-place.

A place where I should never think of bathing either early or late is Warmbrunn; the smell of the sulphureous water is too disgusting. The two principal springs are covered by circular cupola-topped buildings, and in these basins people bathe in common—very early in the morning, the gentlemen, then the ladies, and after them servants, Jews, paupers. As the supply from these springs is not very copious, the influx of fresh water is of course but scanty; hence it is not particularly gratifying to reflect that the basins are let off, and the water com-

pletely renewed, only once a week. There are, however, large bathing-houses, with single baths for persons who dislike bathing in company; but the horrible smell of sulphur renders them intolerable to all but actual sufferers.

Warmbrunn is nevertheless so attractive that visitors repair thither, without needing the baths, as to a delightful country abode. The bulk of them consist of Silesians; few foreigners go to this place. It is not a European bath, like the baths of Bohemia; it is not a universal bath, like the Rhenish, and especially Baden-Baden; it is for the province, or rather the country, of Silesia—for people are not fond of being comprehended under the subordinate denomination of province; and, as they have their own capital, Breslau, where they reside in winter, so they have also at home a bathing-place to which the Silesian is ardently attached. As then the flower of the company consists of Silesian families who are all acquainted with one another, and most of them connected by the bonds of friendship or consanguinity, and consequently form of themselves a separate coterie, strangers would have great difficulty to gain admission into this circle, unless its members were kindly disposed towards them and prepossessed in their favour. In Berlin, an amiable friend, who belongs herself to one of the first Silesian families, said to me, "In Silesia, people will not speak to you till they know your pedigree." I can, however, judge from my own experience alone. I have ex-

perienced a most friendly reception, an hospitable attention, which shows an interest in the stranger and yet leaves him at perfect liberty. But, as I belong to the "caste," as people now say—and besides, am just now the fashion, as I say to myself—that assertion may be on the whole correct. Noble and not noble are said to be strictly separated in society, and this is not to be effected without a strong spirit of caste—especially in Prussia, where the prodigiously extensive host of placemen, with its various ramifications, forms a very numerous and important class, into which people are received without regard to birth, and attain to the highest posts in the State, and of course cannot possibly be excluded from the first society. Under such circumstances, it must require most skilful management to keep the caste pure.

For my part, I believe that there will soon be no other nobility but that which consists of servants of the State, nearly the same as in Russia; whoever holds this or that office is noble, be he even the son of a peasant. The period of history which began with the Reformation, about three hundred and fifty years ago, and established nobility and church upon the footing on which they still subsist, is approaching to its end—that is undeniable; for the forms in which both institutions still continue to exist, have ceased to content any one. They are decaying, giving way, cracking, and breaking on all sides, and the minority only yet cling tenaciously to



them. To harmonize the present with the past, with the fragments that still protrude from the one into the other, appears to me useless. One ought to strive, on the contrary, to harmonize the future with the present; this must be the task of those superior minds, who cast a prophetic glance over their own time, and also into that which is approaching, and who are never so necessary for nations as just now, at the moment of a closing period.

On what basis the company at Warmbrunn will be organised a century hence, I shall not pretend to decide; at present they amuse themselves there extremely well with balls, assemblies, parties of pleasure to points more or less distant in the surrounding country; and in bad weather they have the public room and a neat little theatre. The drama seems to be a great favourite in Silesia. Not only at Warmbrunn and Salzbrunn, where it has been introduced for the entertainment of the visitors to the baths, but also in very small towns, with a few thousand inhabitants, there are playhouses. The people, certainly, need pleasure, amusement, as well as we, and have, from the olden times, had and been passionately attached to their dramatic entertainments, their parish feasts, and archery meetings, their religious and profane festivals, at which there was always enough to be seen; but this fondness for the theatre appears to me most particularly to be regretted. Genuine art does not find its way to those stages, and if it did, it would not make an

impression on the unpractised taste, which, chiefly demands performances full of show and bustle. The fondness for the theatre attests a certain morbid longing for amusement, and a thirst for sensual excitement, which, in this sphere, appear to me the more melancholy the more difficult they are to satisfy. It is not very long since there were no theatres in Switzerland, because the little republics feared that vanity and a love of diversions and dissipation would be fostered to an extent for which the limited circumstance of those times afforded no scope. Such patriarchal precautions, indeed, are out of season now, and perhaps people would be all the better if a great number of prohibitions were removed, and governments were to say to them, "Say, see, hear, write, read, what you please, and show, in doing so, that you are rational creatures."

For eight days I was detained at Warmbrunn by my principal object, to ascend the Schneekoppe, the loftiest mountain in Germany, excepting the Alps. The weather forbade its accomplishment; the sun always set in a prodigious stratus; the chaffinch always twittered his rain-notes; the garden spider always tore holes in her web, to spare herself the vexation of seeing it rent by the coming storm; and the barometer always stood at changeable.

Meanwhile, I made little excursions to places which have less need of clear weather than the Schneekoppe, to the celebrated parks in the valley of Hirschberg, for instance, and to Brückenberg,

a parish in the mountains, where they are erecting, at the expense of the king of Prussia, an ancient Norwegian church, which was taken down in its own country, and purchased by him. It is constructed entirely of wood, and, having grown gray and unsightly with age, the materials have been nicely planed, and the church, which, indeed, is not finished, looks very little better than a wooden barn. Four pillars, in the interior, supporting the rafters of the flat roof, have rude carving upon the capitals. The whole appears to me like the work of savages, and is at the same time on so small a scale that one would almost take it for a plaything. The massive bell-tower of free-stone erecting by the side of this wooden cabin, causes it to look doubly so. 'Tis a pity that it was not turned into a chapel in some Catholic country, which, placed on the solitary mountain-top, or down in a rocky ravine, might invite the wanderer to rest from earthly cares; to this purpose it would be precisely suited, so small, so wild, and so forlorn it is. Now, opened, according to Protestant custom, every Sunday, and provided with organ and pulpit, it will not form a particularly pleasing object.

In my opinion, the wooden houses in the park of Erdmannsdorf, inhabited by those Protestant Tyrolese, who emigrated a few years since from the Zillerthal on account of their religion, and here form a little colony, are handsomer. The mansion of Erdmannsdorf is rebuilding, and the park is quite a

new creation, destitute of trees. That at Fischbach cannot be much older; and the park of Buchwald alone is adorned and enriched with majestic old trees, in whose shade one loves to linger, and which form such beautiful frames to views of the hills, or a fore-ground to the prospects from them.

Fischbach has an air of melancholy, of being cut off from the world, little variety of landscape, and likewise but few views of the mountains. I can imagine what a desirable hermitage it must be at times for princes; who, by way of change, wish neither to see nor hear anything of what is passing in the world. One of the summer-houses contains a real jewel, precisely one of those for which I could envy princes; namely an ancient little altar-piece, which an archbishop of Cologne presented to the princess.\* You are acquainted, my dear mamma, with the famous large altar-piece in the cathedral of Cologne, by an unknown, old German master—an Epiphania in the centre, and on the sides St. Ursula, the patron-saint of the city, with her eleven thousand virgins, and St. Gereon, with his eleven thousand bachelors—By the by, I do not recollect from what barbarians the holy bands were fleeing; I believe it was the Huns; but I should think they were numerous enough to defend themselves, instead of submitting to be martyred. Well, the same subject on

\* These estates belong to the Princess of Liegnitz, originally a Countess Harrach, who was united by what is called abroad amorganatic marriage to the late King of Prussia.—Ta.

a small scale is represented in this little piece; but it has two additional side-wings, with the Virgin Mary and the Angel of the Annunciation. It is painted with such—shall I say simplicity or ignorance?—one may say both; for science then lay enchained, and of anatomy the painter knew nothing, and of perspective very little. With a mind free and unencumbered by the rubbish of study, he fell to work upon his subject, and painted just as his child-like genius guided his pencil. This is the prodigious difference between the old painters and the modern who strive to paint in that old manner. The old painters really knew nothing. The modern affect to know nothing. Such as Fiesole, for example, a pious friar, who passed his whole life in the service of the altar; what could he know of the beauty of the female figure? He was a stranger to it, and so he painted it with that angular, dry, meagreness of forms, which certainly offends the eye in his productions and those of his contemporaries. In doing this, he certainly sinned against truth; and the individual truth, that he *could* not paint the female form otherwise, simply manifests itself.

Now, on the contrary, there is not a painter who practises his art shut up between the four walls of a convent. He studies at academies and schools of art, on his travels, in museums, in galleries, in the painting-rooms of masters, in the motley life of the world, in the rich life of Nature :

there are models of all sorts, of flesh and blood as well as of marble. Why, then, belie these studies in his own productions, and, in the representation of sacred subjects, fall into that dry stiffness and meagreness, which exist neither in reality nor in the imagination of the painter, consequently are a wilful deviation from truth ?

This I often ask myself, before many paintings representing the Virgin, and angels, and holy women, and which fortunately are more and more rarely painted. Yes, fortunately: for artists no longer understand how to paint them, and how should they ? Art can only represent in a glorified form that to which it has a devotion, in which it believes ; for this reason, in my opinion, the painters of the present day excel in their landscapes ; these are indeed masterly. A fervent love, a belief in divine revelation in Nature, a devotion to it, which manifests itself in a deep appreciation of its beauties, seem to me to be there expressed in language not to be mistaken. Were I ever to form a collection of pictures, I should choose landscapes exclusively, with two or three exceptions.

The ancient painters considered the whole terrestrial world as a world which had fallen off from God, and therefore treated it slightly ; to us, on the contrary, it is a marvellous revelation, the impressive mysteries of which fill the soul with holy awe, and furnish with every new sunrise fresh subject for admiration. This different way of viewing

things, which depends on the spirit and character of the respective epochs, is expressed in the treatment of landscape: to the ancient painters it was dead; to us Nature is instinct with life. This conviction is not merely a progressive movement, as so many other things which have set themselves in motion now are; but a real advance, an infusion of spirit into material phenomena; and the more spirit the more life in the world.

The ruin of the Castle of Kynast, rich in traditions, overlooks the whole country round Warmbrunn; so lofty, open, and picturesque is its situation on a ripen mass of rock. The valley cowers around its foot, as about the throne of a queen; and meadows, gardens, villages, small towns, streams, wooded hills, compose a motley carpet. I had been told that there was a scarcity of water in the Silesian mountains; but I have not found it so. Excepting Switzerland, that favoured country, endowed with every charm, where lakes are scattered like pearls among the diamonds of the mountains, and vie with them in beauty, I know of no mountains, neither the Pyrenees nor the Tyrolese Alps, among whose scenery water constitutes a predominant feature. So long as the rivers are among the hills, they are not far from their sources, and consequently small; they are still compressed also by the valleys; and it is not till they reach the plain that they become broad and large. In a rich mountain tract, for instance,

in the Pyrenean valley of Argelès, one of the most beautiful that I am acquainted with, the river looks like a silver embroidery on the border of a dress. And so, too, I have found the Zacken, which forms a waterfall at top, sufficiently large for the Giant Mountains.

At last came a day that promised a fine sunset. The clouds, lightening up towards noon, were dispersed by the sun's rays, and the spider wove her web entire. Away then, after dinner, to the Koppe, by way of St. Anne's Chapel, the Schlingelbaude, and the Hampelbaude. A *baude* is the same thing as a *châlet* in Switzerland—a wooden house in which the business of the dairy is carried on; and here, as there, that business is assiduously pursued in the mountains. Here, however, the *baude* is at the same time a sort of public house, into which, in Switzerland, where there are inns enough, the *châlet* is but on rare occasions converted.

Owing to the continued rain, the roads were in a wretched state. I, therefore, made up my mind to be carried. It would have fatigued me exceedingly to walk up hill for four hours and a half, especially as the last stage, the ascent of the peak, which must always be performed on foot, is rather toilsome from its steepness. Accordingly, we rode as far as Seidorf, and then pursued our course upward, mostly through fir-woods, sometimes over level swamps, meadow-grounds, here and there commanding extremely beautiful prospects of the valley,



brilliantly lighted by the beautiful rays of the afternoon sun.

We reached the Hampelbaude in three hours. The view from it is amazingly beautiful: the eye glances over the numerous abodes of men below, and finds no point of repose but the serene, azure sky above, overspreading, like a protecting tent-cover, all the animated and busy scenes beneath. From such an elevation, indeed, the prospect is not exactly suited to the eye, but it strengthens the heart, because it does not show individual objects, but a whole, in which the parts blend together, and none of them are more prominent than the others. There, neither vanity nor arrogance, neither envy, malice, hatred, or any of those passions which embitter human life, can bear sway. There, you feel yourself surrounded by a refreshing peace, and when, hereafter, I hear people prating about liberty, I will say to them, "Go to the mountains; live solitary there, as hunters, as herdsmen; that is real liberty, an independence of all external influences. Liberty must be absolute; every modified liberty is no liberty at all, is limited to liberties, that is, to certain privileges, advantages, immunities, rights, laws—call them what you will—in short, concessions made to individuals, which they first use, then abuse. That is the course of every thing that people below yonder are pleased to call liberty. Ah! how I rejoice that I shall soon see the Bedouins! There I shall find what I call

liberty. Civilization makes men slaves, not one, but all."

Now there was little civilization enough at the Hampelbaude, but a sort of patriarchal state. A spacious room, with tables, benches, stools, and containing a prodigious green brick stove, was the general rendezvous of all comers. There were seated travellers, guides, and chairmen; there sat men-servants at their supper; there maids pursued their avocations, boiled milk, cleaned kitchen utensils; lastly, thither came young people and musicians from the nearest villages, to convert this room into a ball-room, and to dance away the night in the Hampelbaude, for it was Saturday, July 29th, and we had already been told by the men who carried us that dancing was the customary holiday evening's amusement there. When we perceived that this was no joke, we continued our journey, and proceeded along the saddle of the mountain to the peak.

The Hampelbaude is seated on a sheltered plain, which affords abundant pasturage. But no sooner have you ascended the Seifenlehne, as it is called, than the mountain assumes a sterile character; and, at an elevation where Switzerland exhibits the most luxuriant pastures, nothing is to be seen here but stunted firs. The peak itself is covered all over with loose stones and fragments of rock; and yet the loftiest point of the Schneekoppe is only 5000 feet high.

Thus far the prospect from the Hampelbaude had

continued to be clear and unobstructed, though the wind began to blow strong and cold. The more the sun sank, the more violent it became, and with great rapidity it drove together a host of clouds, which, after pursuing and rolling over one another, collected into a dense dark grey mass, which covered the peak like an opaque bell, so that we could soon not distinguish plain or mountain, sky or earth. Meanwhile, the wind had increased to a storm, which was sensibly felt when the ascent of the peak commenced. This is entirely bare, exposed to all winds, and at the same time very steep. It became difficult enough for me to keep my feet, and now to climb the rough paths into the bargain. In half an hour we were at the top, and, when one of the porters who had led and helped me along said in a kind manner "You can walk well," I felt flattered and rewarded for my exertion. But this was my only reward, for so thick was the darkness which enveloped us that we could discern only the nearest objects, though it was not more than half past eight o'clock.

We found an hospitable reception at the Chapel. Such is the name of the inn, which count Schaffgotsch, the proprietor of this whole country, has had fitted up for travellers; a small, circular, turret-like building, with very massive walls, and extremely small windows close under the roof, as a protection from the blast that blows here seven eighths of the year. When I say that it gave us an hospitable re-

ception, I mean that it gave us what it had ; shelter and frugal fare of eggs and ham, bread and butter. At this height nothing grows, nothing is to be had, not even water ; everything must be carried up, and so people make shift with what is indispensable. In Switzerland, on the Rigi, it is indeed otherwise. There you find as good fare as in any other Swiss inn, a long range of small chambers with convenient beds, a saloon with a piano, and a small library ; and yet it is higher than the Schneekoppe. On the former, it is true, you find also the whole travelling world, and on the latter a very small fraction of it.

Luckily, we met with very little company ; a father with three young boys, who had stoutly footed it all the way, and a few other gentlemen. This was, indeed, fortunate, for the space is extremely limited. The interior of the Chapel is one room : a large iron stove warms it, and likewise serves for cooking ; and on one side is a closet, in which crockery, linen, and also provisions are kept. Long tables and benches constitute the furniture of the public room. Narrow stairs lead up to a sort of balcony or lodge, in which there are about half a dozen sleeping places, that is, mattresses. Better accommodation is not to be had up there.

I laid myself quietly down upon a mattress, and found this situation a capital preparation for a tour in the East. The lower room was occupied for the night by the people of the house, the porters, and

the guides. At first they amused themselves with cards, and the endless garrulity of people of their class kept them awake till about midnight. The general couch of straw, improved by a few feather-beds, was then spread, conversation gradually ceased, and the enviable sleepers were soon snoring most lustily.

Unluckily, I was not sufficiently fatigued to be able to sleep. A storm of extraordinary violence raged the whole night, and every hour I impatiently counted the strokes of the great clock hanging against the wall. When it began to dawn, loud voices were heard out of doors, requesting admittance. The people of the house were instantly stirring, but first cleared away the straw: those outside were extremely angry at the delay. A sharp altercation ensued, and, at length, when the door was opened, in poured a whole torrent of people, part of the company who had been dancing at the Hampelbaude, and who wished to enjoy the sight of sunrise on the Koppe.

Glad to have got over the night, I was soon upon my legs, unusually soon, as I had not even taken out my hair-pins, not even put off my shoes. But I gained nothing by it; for the sun rose buried in impenetrable fog, which sometimes fell in icy drops, and accompanied by a furious wind. The Chapel was now crowded with people, the atmosphere heavy to suffocation, and yet they wrapped themselves in their cloaks, for they could not have a

fire, because the wind drove the smoke down the chimney.

Broad day made no change in this uncomfortable situation; all now had clearly perceived that they had taken the trouble to come for nothing. A little canary-bird, whose cage hung from the top of one of the windows, attempted to chant a morning song, and brought forth a few notes. But he must have found his little throat compressed as by hostile elements; he soon ceased his strain, drew himself up into a ball beneath his feathers, and sat dejected and silent upon his perch. We all sat so too. Now and then, one of the party went out of doors to ascertain the state of the weather, and brought bad tidings back to us. The very water-carrier of the house, who was pretty well inured to all sorts of weather, was obliged to abandon his morning errand, the wind having hurried him away, and whirled his pails one way and his pipe another. At length, about seven o'clock, it was reported that the storm had somewhat abated, and we might start on our return. All broke up; but some, when they got out, found the wind still so furious that they turned back. I would not. Nothing worse could happen than to be blown down, and, to avoid that, I needed only to stoop, when a more violent blast than usual came upon us.

We set out: one of the carriers took hold of my arm; the other went on before with the light seat upon his back. Every step was a battle. "*Donner-*

*wetter!*"\* suddenly exclaimed my guide—I beg pardon for him, dear mamma, but he really used that energetic expression. When an Italian rower begins to pray, things are rather critical: so they are too when a German guide, porter, or labourer, begins, on such an occasion, to curse and swear. I asked, in some degree of alarm, what was the matter. He pointed to his comrade with the seat. At the turn of the path, which brought one right in the teeth of the wind, the sturdy fellow was standing stock-still; for, the moment he attempted to advance a step, he was flung back two. My guide declared that he could not undertake to conduct me down alone, and that, on account of my wide clothes; he would, therefore, first help his comrade to carry the seat to the bottom of the peak. This done, both came back to me, grasped my arms with all their might, and so we got down unharmed, though often tottering and slipping. What think you of the idea that I, like a light ship carrying too much sail, was obliged to have one of my carriers hung for ballast to each arm? .

At the foot of the peak, the worst was over; for, on the broad saddle, you need not feel apprehensive of being blown over precipices. Whether these precipices on the peak are really so near and so steep as my carriers assured me, now that the danger

\* Literally "thunderstorm;" an expression equivalent to the Frenchman's *mille tonnerres*, and Paddy's "blood and tunder."—T.

was over, I cannot decide, for in a dense fog I both ascended and left it. By noon we were again in Warmbrunn, where the weather was delightful, while clouds still rested upon the mountains.

Such is the sad but true account of my excursion to the Koppe. For the rest, I have rarely found it otherwise upon high mountains ; and, therefore, the particularly pleasing impression of Warmbrunn has not been at all weakened by this disappointment. That which pleased me best of all there, and in consequence of which ruins, mountains, and waterfalls cannot suffer in my estimation, is one person—the amiable mistress of Warmbrunn.

Next morning, we drove by way of Hirschberg, Schweidnitz, Frankenstein, to the County of Glatz, a small district, rent as by a snatch from Bohemia, and united by the seven years' war with Silesia. Its appearance is much more Bohemian than Silesian. It has not the wide smiling valleys of Silesia, bounded by a range of mountains ; it has not the rich, fresh alleys of fruit-trees along the road-sides ; it has not the pretty rural villages, where the cottages, surrounded with gardens, lie scattered on all sides ; it has not the neat little towns, surprising by the appearance of opulence, with their new stately houses.

The County, as it is commonly called here, is a hill-tract of undulated surface, exhibiting great monotony in colour and aspect, corn-fields and nothing but corn-fields, up hill and down hill, and here and



there a woody declivity, above which rises a place of pilgrimage—a chapel of St. Anna near Glatz, a Virgin Mary of the Snow, near Habelschwert—and sometimes also a gentleman's mansion. The inhabitants are stanch Catholics. Noblemen and gentlemen of the Austrian monarchy are chiefly the proprietors of the soil, which is said to be excellent, and more productive even than that of Silesia; they have also seats, with beautiful parks, which are obligingly opened to strangers—as Kunzendorf, near Landeck, and Count Herberstein's Grafenort, whose lovely park, overshadowed by noble trees, and adorned with a profusion of magnificent flowers, appeared to me the most delightful spot in the whole County.

The climate is considerably colder than in Silesia. While the harvest near Breslau began about the middle of July, it was to commence in the milder districts of the County, about Glatz, with August; and higher in the mountains, near Cudowa, not till the end of that month. The County is by far not so well cultivated, neither is the land kept in such good condition as in Silesia; it had to me more of a Slavonic appearance, like Moravia, like Bohemia. It is as though the Slavonic tribes were content with forcing the soil to yield just so much as they absolutely need. There the peasants' cottages stand quite bare; no garden surrounds them; not a rose-bush adorns them. But now and then some climbing plant or other throws its green arms about the image of the Virgin, in a little niche by the house-

door. For themselves they desire not the trifling luxury which they expend upon the Saint.

It is reported, indeed, that the prosperity of those large and handsome Silesian villages, many of them numbering several thousand inhabitants, has considerably declined since the linen manufactures, their principal occupation, have ceased to be so flourishing as formerly. I have heard tales of most pitiable distress, of abject and hopeless misery. The Silesian linen was never celebrated and sought after for its excellence, but for its cheapness; though on that account it was in such request that the manufacturers had extended their dealings as far as Spain. Hence the foreign denominations for Silesian linens; for instance, *Creas*. Since they began to mix cotton with the web, nay, to substitute stuffs entirely cotton to linen; since England has, with her spinning machines, crushed all the linen-weavers of Germany, and can supply goods at a much cheaper rate; since then the Silesian linen has not been able to maintain its ground against the prodigious competition. It is also alleged that some manufacturers have, through the abuse of chlore in bleaching, furnished goods that were not lasting, and thereby injured the trade.

Many of the linen-weavers have now turned cotton-weavers, but that business is so enormously overstocked that it produces very little: the wages of a whole week are said to amount to about half a dollar, say twenty-six dollars a-year; and out of this

the workman has to keep himself, and a wife and children ! Other linen-weavers again are obstinate : they are determined to stick to a trade which their fathers and grandfathers carried on before them, and consider the weaving of cotton as degrading. In short, in the Silesian mountains, as in those of Saxony, wherever agriculture is not the main resource of the common man, there prevails a deep distress, an abject poverty, which wrings the heart, especially when you hear tell how very different, how flourishing things were formerly, whereas now, one blossom of prosperity is dropping off after another. But, as I have already remarked, this does not yet force itself upon observation by external appearances. The case is much the same as that of merchants, who live in wealth and splendour, till their failure makes known that ten, twelve years ago they sustained ruinous losses.

In the County there are not such large manufacturing villages as in Silesia ; hence it is not so populous and animated ; and this, as well as the everlasting undulations of the ground, produces a striking contrast between it and the country with which it is incorporated. According to my taste, Silesia is much finer, and for this reason, because it is stamped with a more decided mountain character, extensive valleys, bounded, or enclosed by lofty mountains ; whereas, in the County, the high mountains, such as the Heuscheuer and the Schneeberg, appear too small for the considerable undulations of

the ground, and are not high enough to overlook them. But it has individual points that are beautiful and interesting, especially the Heuscheuer, just mentioned, which we ascended from Cudowa.

The bathing-places in the County—yes, they are remarkable, my dear mother, that is to say, remarkably bad. So total a destitution of all that constitutes comfort can scarcely be imagined in these our days; it borders on the comic, especially in what relates to beds, which, for domestic economy, are made so short and narrow that none but a pigmy race could lie at ease in them. On this scanty bedstead are piled burley feather-beds, which always, and here in particular, produce a certain close smell; and, if you have them removed, you get nothing but a hay mattress, which also has not the most agreeable scent. The bed-clothes are spread over this—sheets not much larger than a pocket-handkerchief, and not clean unless you expressly desire such. Would you believe it?—on all the room-doors of the inns you find a list of prices posted up, and there you read with inexpressible astonishment: a bed costs so or so much; with clean sheets a few groschen more. I was reminded of the village inns in Spain, where the public room is provided with wash-hand basin and towel for general use. The petty towns of the County, Glatz, Habelschwert, are chiefly visited, no doubt, by such travellers only who are not over-nice on this point of community of property; and to the bathing-

places to which Silesians and some Poles alone resort, they travel with bag, baggage, and an entire household establishment. They then take a lodging, fill it with their own things, and feel quite comfortable—at least at Landeck, where many families pass the summer. The inns are, in consequence, detestable.

Setting aside this drawback, Landeck is an agreeable place, especially when you have got used to its cramped situation. On the first day, I felt everywhere as if I was under ground. The valley is so small, and so full of undulations, that there is a little hill before almost every house, and quite close, perhaps only on the other side of the road. Thus you are continually in a sort of pit; not, indeed, between dreary walls of rock, but between green declivities, and this green produces a pleasing effect.

Landeck's chief ornament, its necklace, is the Biela, a charming little river, gliding between alders, so rapidly, so nimbly, babbling, murmuring, bright as silver, so that you are never tired of looking at and listening to it. Like that elegantly shaped snake, which in the day-time glistens like gold, and at night is adorned with silver scales, it imparts life and movement to the narrow valley, and on its account one learns to love the latter. For the rest, Landeck, even without the Biela, would have left an agreeable impression upon me, because I found the company extremely amiable. I had heard that the Silesians are so national in their partialities as

scarcely to notice any but a Silesian. I can only attest the contrary.

Some celebrated points about Landeck, the ruins of Karpenstein, and the Dreiecker, afford indeed views over the host of hills; but to me these appear more monotonous when seen from above than when I am among them. At Karpenstein, the most remarkable circumstance was that, when we were at the top, the guide had to seek the ruin, and declared himself extremely dissatisfied with the relics—he had never been up before! Nothing is left but a few fragments of the walls of an ancient castle, which are scarcely to be distinguished from loose blocks of stone. To my joy and my surprise, I found a bush of the Alpine rose, in clambering among the ruins; I knew not that this plant is to be found on other mountains in Germany besides the Alps.

The Wölfelsfall is the most interesting scene about Landeck, and really charming. Imposing, grand, as I have heard it called, it certainly is not by any means, and, upon the whole, I have met with nothing of a wild and gloomy character in the County. Rude and solitary, a little northern idyl, so I should describe it; and the individual points to which attention is paid, the bathing-places, and the parks attached to the mansions, are like fugitive gleams of sunshine passing over corn-fields and pasture-lands.

You are conveyed to the Wölfelsfall in a Silesian vehicle, with wicker body on four wheels, and a cir-

cular awning of striped linen drawn tight over it, so that you are protected from sun and rain. In these carriages, doors are exceptions—a luxury: with one bold step you are up in them. The seats are suspended by thongs, and swing about, so that the body sways to and fro, while the feet remain stationary at the bottom of the carriage, which rests upon the axles, without participating in the movement. This is excessively fatiguing, for the ordinary roads are wretchedly bad, while the high roads, mostly of a stone resembling basalt, are excellent. In those light vehicles then, it is easy to penetrate to a great height among the mountains; and if you go to the Wölfelsfall, you must descend to it, as, falling into a narrow ravine, it first forms a small basin, out of which it then flows on through a grotto. The whole scene, with its rocks and trees, is extremely picturesque; and the sight and sound of a waterfall exercise a magic charm over me—whether it be the little Wölfel, or the giant Rhine. Without being conscious of any other feeling than pleasure in this never-ceasing, mighty, and graceful movement, which is not even unrest, I can sit for hours together and watch the fall of the water. Who knows but that there dwells in it a spirit who speaks mysteriously to us, and whom we might not merely hear as now, but really understand, if our spirit could release itself from the shackles of the body for a while, a very little while, and then quickly resume them, throw itself into them again, as into the parachute which

brings the traveller back from the balloon to the earth !

At Reinerz, I was only half a league from the little town of that name, the suburb of which, called Kohlhan, is the actual bathing-place. Ah ! how dreary every thing appeared to me ! It was a lovely day, but to me every thing looked so dismal, especially the grand promenade, the long, straight alley, which intersects the meadow, and is certainly the most convenient walk for persons afflicted with pulmonary complaints. There, too, were walking, or sitting some visitors to the baths, but how pale, how languid, how emaciated ! The mere sight of them pains the heart. My beloved mother, I have four wishes. No—not wishes—they are prayers. Towards a wish one may do something one's self ; that I cannot. Mine, therefore, are only prayers ; but, for that reason, so much the more fervent. They are : health, a strong heart, the love of those dear to me, and, when the time comes to die, a speedy death. With the fulfilment of the first three life is worth living for ; then one may endure much, struggle much, win much ; and the fulfilment of the last makes death an ascent to heaven. How deeply this was impressed upon my soul at Reinerz !

A deluge poured down upon us, on the way from that place to Cudowa, which lies pretty high in the mountains, and very near the Bohemian frontier. The name signifies, in Bohemian, *poverty* ; and it is



certainly the poorest bathing-place that I know. In a damp summer, the visitors must be most uncomfortable in those mean wooden houses, the duties of which are performed by dirty, bare-footed maid-servants. But the people are officious, good-natured, friendly; they are anxious to make you comfortable, and have no idea that there can be any place in the world superior to Cudowa. Their honest faces, at last, even persuade you to believe so too. Cheerful walks and flower-beds lead to a chapel upon a hill, which we ascended at an early hour of the damp morning, till the carriage was got ready to take us to the Heuscheuer. It had rained violently; the roads were bottomless, the ride incommodious; sometimes we alighted, and sometimes the driver got down and clapped his shoulder as a support against the vehicle: the weather, into the bargain, was so doubtful, the sky so overcast with clouds, that scarcely any prospect was to be expected on the Heuscheuer. A fog enveloped the whole country; nothing was to be seen but the road. That ran close beside a rivulet, or through it, and on leaving it, climbed up break-neck steeps over trackless ridges of hills. Mean villages, with poor barefooted inhabitants, looked most deplorable, wrapped in the gray mist.

In this manner we proceeded, for three hours, mostly up hill, to the village of Carlsberg, seated on an elevated plain, at the foot of the Heuscheuer,

where you find a guide in the Schulze.\* When we were just ready to start, a violent blast of wind drove part of the clouds into the bottom, and suddenly unveiled the Heuscheuer, which, in its extended form, flattened at top like a roof, certainly bears a distant resemblance to a rude colossal building. But how wonderfully is this rock—shall I say cloven or joined together?—in the same way as Adersbach, but yet quite differently. There, as here, are detached masses of rocks; but there all affect more or less the pyramidal form; here they are more compressed into clumps. Adersbach is certainly a greater curiosity, though here are to be seen remarkable conformations—the easy chair, the black's head, the pulpit, &c.; but to the rocks of the Heuscheuer you ascend, by most convenient steps, to an elevation of 2,800 feet above the level of the sea, commanding a view over the County and into Bohemia, and of the different ranges of the Silesian mountains.

Oh! how magnificent is this rocky world, so fabulous and so inexplicable! In one rock there is a round hole: the guide strikes it inside with a hammer, and it rings like a bell, with a sonorous metallic sound; but only in one hole, and why in that? In a straight, deep cleft, stands a mass of rock, smooth as slate, to which a forcible shove of the foot imparts a vibratory motion. I! to the rock! only think!

\* The magistrate of a village corresponding with the *maire* in France.—T.

At the top, on a slab, there is a distinct impression of a neatly fluted cockle, and there are several indistinct ones. What sort of state of the earth must that have been when this mass of sandstone was a pulp in which shell-fish were imbedded ! and what changes must have gradually hardened that pulp into stone ! That delicate figure of the cockle bespeaks most plainly the perishable nature of the terrestrial creation : what has been must be swept away ; and that I am sorry for, when I contemplate the beautiful earth. And the contrasts of Nature, how delightful are they ! It gives an interest to the water that nothing leaves behind its traces upon it, and to the rock, when it has such traces to exhibit !

Many hamlets, villages, towns, are to be seen from the summit. The fortress of Silberberg, said to be impregnable—a Silesian Gibraltar ;—Glatz, the fortress of the County, with its white, shimmering walls ; in Bohemia, Braunau ; Nachod, where Wallenstein is said to have been born, is intercepted by a mountain. But this is a disputed point. Around the great phenomena in the history of the world, the charm which is inseparable from greatness of every kind throws a magic light, which, celestial or diabolical to the eyes of contemporaries, is reflected upon them so strongly that they have no need to inquire whence and whither. Of these contemporaries, one relates the story to his children in this way, another in that ; as they had been told

it, or according to the best of their knowledge. After a long, long time, come the authors; sifting, comparing, studying, they find that the dates do not agree, or perhaps not the facts; and I hope that very soon one of them will come forward with proofs, clear as day, that the great general never existed, because the precise place of his birth is not known. It is astonishing that the consistent development of a one-sided notion may be hailed as a triumph of science.

I had not time to visit the renowned Gräfenberg, situated in Austrian Silesia, on the frontier of Moravia. I wished to reach Vienna, where a fortnight would pass rapidly away in all sorts of preparations for the further journey; and, for reaching any goal speedily, the railways are excellent. On long indifferent roads, like that from Olmütz to Vienna, I wish myself nothing better.

While the mountains of the County continue to descend by gradually subsiding ramifications into Moravia, the character of the country remains nearly the same, only the long Moravian villages, built street-wise, have an unpleasant appearance without either trees or water. On the other hand, they have, but only for the space of fifteen or twenty miles, surprisingly beautiful women—beauties of a most peculiar character; the face rather broad, and also the upper part of the nose; large, brilliant, dark eyes, a pale yellow complexion, and entwined about the black hair a flowered handkerchief, which

is wound turban-fashion over the forehead, and the two ends of which hang down at the temples. This head-dress, over faces of that cast, reminds one of Egyptian statues. As it was Sunday and fine weather, I enjoyed the sight of them seated at their doors or walking about. A few miles farther, every thing is lost in breadth, female faces as well as landscape; and I really believe that night, which gradually closed in, did not conceal any beauty from my view. At eleven o'clock we reached Olmütz, which is situated in an extensive plain, and at two in the afternoon of the following day, after a passage of eight hours upon the railroad, we arrived at the Golden Lamb hotel in this city.

This was a little journey without adventures of any kind. Neither shall I meet with any on the Danube; but, after that, my dear mother, you must permit me to hope for some.

## LETTER II.

### TO MY MOTHER.

Preparations for travel — Baron Hügel's Country House at Hietzing.

Vienna, August 22nd, 1843.

TO-DAY, just two lines, my dearest mamma, to tell you that my departure is definitively fixed for the day after to-morrow, at five in the morning.

Be not surprised that, from the beautiful, opulent, joyous Vienna, I say little more to you than I have arrived and I am leaving. My principal idea, during this fortnight, was that of my departure, and there was no end to business with artisans and shopkeepers, since one is obliged to provide one's self for such a tour with a multitude of necessities, which are not to be found on the Lebanon or at the Pyramids. I am not speaking of luxuries or conveniences, but only of absolute necessities. Now it is, indeed, no little plague to be forced to consider so long beforehand, whether one is sufficiently supplied with shoes and gloves or not; the grand object for which I came hither—to collect letters for the East—is accomplished. In civilized Europe, where the traveller finds every thing, nay, where all that he can possibly need is offered to and forced upon him, letters of recommendation are almost always inconvenient, because they lead you into certain connexions, whereas you prefer, especially when travelling, such as you choose yourself. But for the East, I conceive them to be indispensable for me, because one may chance to get into situations where one is obliged to claim not merely hospitality, but also protection, advice, and assistance. This wish has been fulfilled with the greatest kindness, and I shall carry away a rich store.

But I have not exactly sat all the time at Vienna with bandaged eyes. I have been at Baden and

at Vöslau; I have seen Strauss in the Volksgarten and in Dommeier's Casino, amidst illuminations, fireworks, and thousands of people; I have been to the theatre, and admired St. Stephen's, seen the picture galleries, and eaten ice at Dehne's: in short I have done here all that the stranger is accustomed to do, and it has given me pleasure, only, indeed, not in that degree as if Vienna had been the object of my journey. These, however, are almost all things, which in a year's time I shall scarcely care to remember, and yet after which I may perhaps long in foreign countries. But I am acquainted with them, and it is precisely what I do not know that I should like to learn: for knowledge is a finer thing than the pleasure afforded by St. Stephen's, by the bacchanalian waltzes of Strauss, and by the pictures of the Venetian masters in the Belvedere.

I shall now soon know how the East appears to the eye of a daughter of the West.

"The tree of knowledge is not that of life,"

says Manfred, with the deep despondence that seizes every one, who honestly and truly surveys the results of his life, which perhaps had no other aim than to make him virtuous and happy, and yet has done neither. This, however, is not the fault either of the one or of the other direction, but of the man who cannot keep himself under control upon it. If he understood how to do this, the tree of knowledge and the tree of life would

overshadow him with the like peace, and the fruits of both would refresh him; whereas now those of the former do not allay his thirst, and those of the latter taste to him excessively insipid; so that the first allure without satisfying him, the second satiate without alluring him. And what else is living, but making use of his powers, and nourishing the soul with the body? What is related in that exquisitely beautiful fable of the Phoenix, that he builds his own funeral pile, out of the flames of which he rises with renewed youth, is applicable to man; only he is not so rare as the phoenix. That portion of our existence which is passed upon earth is in reality nothing but a funeral pile, which we feed with body and life, with heavenly and earthly gifts, and, mostly indeed without intending it, unconsciously; and, not till we meditate upon it, does it occur to us how it really is. An existence that cannot exercise and consume itself in the use of its powers does not deserve to be called life.

I have been at Schönbrunn, in the beautiful garden which comprehends within itself all sorts of gardens. It is solemn and majestic, with its endless hedges and alleys, as far as the Gloriette, where you have a beautiful point of view; then it assumes a more free, unrestrained, and park-like character. A lovely *Jardin des Plantes*, in which wooden tickets to the trees and flowers are not the most conspicuous objects, adjoins it,



and a menagerie, containing foreign and wild beasts, lies quite familiarly between the promenades. I have no sympathy for these beasts. People are always exclaiming: "How intelligent is the elephant! how majestic the lion!" &c. and in a state of freedom they may be so; but, in confinement, I find them only disagreeable, and the elephant is absolutely hideous from his clumsy figure.

But one animal touches me inexpressibly, and that is the eagle, for he furnishes in his cage a most painful picture of the hardships of imprisonment. There he sits motionless; not a feather stirs; he seems to have hardened himself into stone against his fate; nothing lives in him but his eye, and that is an eye of wonderful beauty, resembling the human eye, not round as a ball, like that of other birds, but having the upper lid somewhat depressed, and therefore more oval. And with this melancholy eye, glistening like metal, in which the expression of his life is concentrated, and which is in constant motion, he never looks at men, his tormentors, but always into vacant space. One cannot say that he shuns the sight of man; no, he does not notice him. It is as though he feels that their eyes were not made to meet one another. Now this eagle, so majestic and poetic in his melancholy, lives to be very old in confinement, much older than in a state of freedom, and for this very reason, because he is abundantly supplied with food, whereas in his eyry he is often on short commons. But is this

existence a life for an eagle? I, for my part, am for liberty, scanty fare, and a short life.

Yesterday, I saw, as in a magic mirror, a bit of the East, and not in a panorama or at the theatre, my dear mother, but in reality. We were at Hietzing, at Baron Carl Hügel's, who made an oriental tour in great style, and has been not merely in the East Indies—to say nothing of Syria, Egypt, Arabia; but also in China, New Holland, and New Zealand. In this six years' tour he made collections, the greater part of which the Emperor has bought, and which I saw when I was before in Vienna. But the cream of all he has reserved, and with that he has made his beautiful country-seat a thing which was never before seen, and which is not to be described. When one hears of the valuable and foreign trees, shrubs, and flowers, brought together here in extraordinary abundance, one cannot help thinking of a botanical garden; and it is but an unpretending, convenient pleasure-garden; and in like manner, of a museum, when trophies of Persian and Indian weapons, Chinese pagodas, and Japanese vases, carpets of zebra and tiger skins, Chinese furniture platted with reeds are mentioned; and all the while it is but a small, tasteful, country-house, the owner of which is wholly free from those pretensions that a museum is accustomed to make. No erudition is paraded, no chaotic confusion displayed. A delicate taste has happily

avoided both, and, out of heterogeneous units, composed a most lovely whole.

It was dark evening when we rose from dinner, and stepped into the open hall which runs along the garden front of the house. American creeping plants climb up its pillars; large glowing tropical flowers were slowly waving their beautiful heads in the soft evening breeze; parrots of all sizes, of all colours, sit dreamily and familiarly, among these productions of a zone, which is their home; a strong but delicate perfume, peculiar to the southern plants fills the atmosphere; and the whole fragrant and richly-coloured scene was bathed in the magic light of large, elegant, painted Chinese lamps, suspended from the arches of the hall, like luminous meteors among the verdant creepers. It was like a tale of the Arabian Nights, and it appeared doubly fairy-like in company with all the comfort of European civilization and polish. A whole strange world, rich in wonders and traditions, passed in a few hours like a dream before the delighted and amazed eye.

With this agreeable impression, Vienna dismissed me. This is writing day, to-morrow packing day. Cheerless anticipation! For though I do not take immediately any part in packing up, still it renders me uncomfortable, since I must sit in a room where the things which I am continually wanting, are one by one disappearing from under my hand.

And now, my beloved mother, farewell a thousand and a thousand times, and be under no concern about me. One who has passed unharmed between the pillars of Hercules will get without accident through the Bosphorus, and the Black Sea is not worse than the Cattegat. Hearty in body and mind, I commence the journey, and in full confidence that I shall have strength enough to amass a treasure of recollections for the future, at the expense of some hardships and some difficulties.



## LETTER III.

TO MY BROTHER.

The Sister Towns of Pesth and Buda—The Liberals—Foreign air of the people—Fairs—Exhibition of works of art and manufactures—Theatre—The Emperor's bath.

Pesth, August 26th, 1843.

HAVE you been in Hungary, my dear brother? In your time, I dare say, there were no steamers on the Danube, or at any rate not beyond Presburg; and, as the accommodations for travelling on the roads of this country are said to be wretched enough, you most likely never ventured so far as this. Now, the thing is very easily accomplished. A large, sprightly steamer started with us the day before yesterday, at five in the morning, and by half-past seven in the evening we were here. Neither do

you know, nor can you form any conception of the tumult of the Vienna railroad to Glognitz, at the foot of the Sömmering. On Sundays and holidays, from twenty to thirty thousand persons are sometimes conveyed upon it to Baden alone; and, though it is by no means agreeable to be in one of those prodigious trains, in which you cannot secure a place but almost at the risk of your life; and though I find that the real pleasure of railroad travelling is confined to great distances—still, like those birds which, fascinated by the rattlesnake, tumble into his jaws, wherever there is a railroad, I am sure to be upon it.

It so happened that I took two trips to Baden on Sundays, and one to Vöslau on the Virgin Mary's Ascension day; but all in the most delightful weather; for, indeed, it was not till my arrival at Vienna that summer really commenced. What a concourse of people! and what a distressing idea, that at a whistle this mass must be seated in the carriages! It is a wonder that accidents do not happen every time, with all this crowding, shoving, thrusting, climbing, for the carriages are not, as in North Germany, divided into *coupés* for six persons, but divided longitudinally by a passage, on the right and left of which are the seats, each for two persons. The doors at either end close this passage, and steps lead up to them; this arrangement is said to be common in America, and there is but one thing which I like in it, that the long range of windows

sometimes enables you to get a glimpse of the country, which in many parts is charming. The terminus, with its various buildings, and especially the point of starting, which lies upon vast terraces, are truly majestic.

This branch of architecture is that which is most perfectly understood at the present day: for railroads are a universal necessity, and such a one is sure to be thoroughly studied. The railroad office style, my dear Dinand, will soon be as prevalent, and as generally applied to houses, churches, and palaces, as was formerly the Corinthian, the Gothic, or the *Renaissance* style. It has a lightness, an airiness, an appearance of rapid growth, which harmonize well with the impatient haste of the times. It is said that this Glognitz railroad is to be continued to Trieste, and immense plans are forming for carrying it likewise over the Sömmering. Some talk of a tunnel. At any rate something gigantic will be the result.

The day before yesterday, at four in the morning, we drove through the silent streets of Vienna, and through the quiet Prater, to the steamer. The moon, in her last quarter, was near the horizon, and seemed, in the form of an elegant silver boat, to be letting herself down to the Danube, which, for the first time, I saw of a dark bluish colour. The Prater is a noble spot, with its wide-extended area: it might indeed be better kept, for the fine trees are not even cleared from dead branches; and, at this season of

the year, when almost all the people of fashion have left Vienna, and taken their superb carriages and horses along with them, it is also very dead, because pedestrians cannot fill it, and because hackney-coaches represent but a fraction of that world, which throngs thither in masses at other seasons of the year. But it is beautiful, with its verdant wildernesses, in which the deer rove at large, as in Neuhaus, and with its fresh meadows, where hay is made as in any other rural neighbourhood. I find this really very refreshing and delightful, in the vicinity of so large a city. Now it appeared to slumber, and single pedestrians passed through its shades like dreams, on their way to the steamer.

The vessel gradually filled, the sun rose magnificently, and we soon floated away. I am sorry that I am not acquainted with the finest points of the Danube, which are said to be between Linz and Vienna. I am acquainted with it near its source; then again at Ratisbon, where it runs on between charming hills; and at Linz, where it pursues its course through one of the richest and most luxuriant plains. But the moment of its highest, its poetical beauty is still wanting in my acquaintance with it; and precisely this is necessary to kindle enthusiasm. Perhaps it will arrive yet.

At first, the river was widely expanded, but from Hainburg to Presburg the banks rose into hills, and the ruins of the castles of Hainburg and Theben the one, it is said, owing its origin to the Huns, the

other to the Romans, lie very picturesquely on both sides of the stream; while the more considerable and well preserved ruin of the castle of Presburg is seen haughtily but unpicturesquely overlooking the city; for it is a large quadrangular structure flanked by four towers, which, ravaged by a fire, appears like a heavy, empty chest.

Presburg, at this moment, is very animated; the Diet is sitting. We pursued our way down the stream dotted with islands, between uninhabited and almost uncultivated banks. Sometimes we saw a few horned cattle, which seemed to be assiduously seeking their subsistence; or perhaps a village, which presented no pleasing sight, for it looked stony, sandy, and treeless, like the land itself. The harvest was over, and its produce stood in circular ricks near the farm-houses, not safely housed in close barns. So slightly does man treat the bounteous earth and her gifts!

At Gran, where the primate of Hungary resides, rises an enormous cathedral, which is still building. High roads—that is what ought to be constructed in this country, not churches. Such a cathedral swallows up untold sums, is out of all proportion with the place around it, which it crushes instead of protecting. Among vineyards lie the ruins of Wissegrad, the favourite residence of all the Hungarian kings. The hills crowd terrace-like together, and the river makes such serpentine windings, that you know not whence you are coming or whither



you are going. Islands are scattered in it, but extending for miles, farther than the eye can reach.

Night overtook us before we reached Pesth: at length the numerous lights on both banks indicated the vicinity of the sister-towns. At Pesth, we found that it is just the time of one of the four great fairs, which are annually held there; the town is, in consequence, extremely animated; the inns, coffee-houses, and restaurants of all classes, are filled, and great bustle prevails in the streets.

At Buda, on the other side, all is quiet. This is a more ancient, smaller town, on the slope of a hill; at the top, on the right, is situated the castle, the residence of the Palatine; on the left stands the Observatory: various government buildings lie around, also some convents. From the elevated points you overlook not only the river and all Pesth, which is remarkably low, and therefore dangerously exposed to inundations, but likewise the country, far and wide, in its level uniformity.

At the same time, Pesth is a handsome town, regularly built, with large houses, straight streets, 60,000 inhabitants, whose traffic and industry are greatly facilitated by its low situation close to the river; with a fine theatre, a museum that is now building, and a suspension-bridge existing in the plan: consequently it is approximating to the wants of the age. As for the bridge, some of the piers for which, as well as the plan, are in existence, the prosecution of that work has been stopped, as

I am told, by the circumstance that the Hungarian nobility refuse to pay the toll which is indispensably necessary for defraying the cost, contending that the people alone must pay it, as it has hitherto been customary. But, as the Hungarian nobility call themselves liberal *par excellence*, it is difficult to believe this report, and for their honour I will not believe it.

To the term *liberal*, no signification whatever is beginning to be attached. It always reminds me of the greens and the blues in the time of the Eastern Roman empire, which were originally denominations for the charioteers in the Circus, and were afterwards applied to political parties. To be liberal for one's own profit, as the Hungarian nobility must be, if what I am told of their oppression of the peasantry be true; or as the lawyers are with you in Holstein; or like the Poles, who struggle against the Russian authority, while their common people are held in servitude; is what I cannot comprehend. Whoever desires improvements in a liberal sense, namely, the universal and equal division of rights, as well as of burdens, among all, must not expect any profit from this division, but be the first to make personal sacrifices—he must be such a man, as I am told, Count Stephen Szecheny is in this country. If one looks for a profit from it, the being liberal is but a sort of trade, a source of subsistence, like the carpenter's or the baker's, only with this difference, that it is not so honourable.

This, therefore, is my most decided opinion, liberal, as I understand the term, without profit, with sacrifices only, none but the nobility can be, and none but the ancient nobility, supported upon landed property, wealth, long family distinction, such nobility as still exists in the magnates of this country; and it grieves me when they neglect to be so. I am quite aware that the nobility, when they renounce their rights, liberties, and immunities, cease to be what they were. But we are in the last chapter of their epoch, and it would at least be commendable that they should find a glorious end, such an end as sows seed for the future, but does not allow them to be ground to dead dust by the present.

Here, my dear brother, you have my opinion, and I hope that I have at the same time expressed yours. We now know what we ought to think of the different classes of liberals; and I assure you that it is something extraordinary, if now-a-days two persons agree, not in sentiments—ah no! in words only. But whenever mention is made of institutions which conduce to the general advantage or promote general interests—of steam navigation, high roads, a national museum, that suspension-bridge,—the name of Count Szecheny is always placed foremost, and that is a high and honourable distinction for such a name.

Buda and Pesth have so arranged it between them that they form conjointly the capital of Hungary.

While the former is the residence of the Palatine and the seat of the highest political and military authorities of the kingdom, the latter is the centre of the commerce of Hungary; but they contain nothing whatever remarkable, neither fine buildings, antiquities, collections of art, nor churches. Nay, what struck me still more, Pesth has not even a promenade, and Buda a miserable one. Probably, people here follow the Italian custom of walking about the streets only when they choose to go abroad.

Upon the whole, every thing here seems to me to have much of a southern air. People do not merely walk—they sit, work, sleep, eat, and drink in the street. Almost every third house is a coffee-house, with a broad verandah, around which are ranged sofas and blooming oleanders. Incredible quantities of fruit, grapes, plums, particularly melons, and heaps of water-melons, are offered for sale. Unemployed labourers lie, like lazzaroni, on the thresholds of their doors or on their wheelbarrows, enjoying the siesta. Women sit before the doors, chatting together and suckling their infants. The dark eyes, the loud, deep voices, here and there the piercing eyes, are all southern.

The dress of the women is distinguished by nothing but a large ungraceful cotton handkerchief upon the head, which covers all the hair, and by bare feet. The men wear an outer garment that strikingly resem-

bles a woman's night-dress. Breeches, waistcoat, shirt, appear to be all of one piece, of white linen, descending from the neck to the heels, wide and full of plaits like a woman's gown. When they have taken off the broad-brimmed hat, and tied an apron before them, as they do in many occupations, I cannot help saying, "What tall women those are!" Clumsy boots complete this most simple costume, to which is sometimes added a dark blue waistcoat, without sleeves, but with many white buttons.

This is only the lower class of the people, probably most of them country folk, who have come to the fair, but it is most striking; for strongly marked physiognomies and prominent cheek-bones appear among them. Almost all have black, some of them curly, hair; with straw-coloured or absolutely red, they look hideous. The children appear to me like young wild beasts. Their dress is really not much more than a somewhat looser skin; naked feet, bare head, bristling hair, excessively rapid motions, a scrutinizing, yet shy look, gave me this impression.

Now and then, but very rarely, you see men in the dress that is called pre-eminently the Hungarian, a jacket profusely braided with double sleeves. Still more rare is a man without beard and without pipe. Beards, of which I cannot take it for granted that they are combed and cleaned every morning, are suspicious to me—and these were excessively so; but,

at any rate, they give the people a certain martial air, which I like better than the military one to which we are accustomed in North Germany; for the one is natural, the other the effect of training.

As I have done nothing for the last two days but stroll about the streets, peering right and left, I can speak of nothing else but what I see there; and every moment the earnest wish arises within me, "Oh! that I could draw!" But it is very extraordinary that I can do nothing of all that I have learned, or for which, at least, I have had a master; and the only thing that I have not been taught—to write a book—I can do. I wonder that artists do not come to this country; they would find abundant subjects. Under the gateway of a large house a fruit-seller had very carelessly exposed his goods; the water-melons were laid upon the ground. There he too lay stretched himself, under a fine oleander-tree, with the pipe in his mouth, thoughtfully contemplating the clouds of smoke that he puffed from it. The broad hat threw a deeper shade over his dark face, and the contrast between that black grave head, and the rose-coloured blossoms which waved over it was really superb.

The considerable traffic in soap, which is likewise carried on in the street, is unpleasant both to eye and nose, especially in this violent heat. As Hungary is sheltered on the north by the Carpathians, the climate is much warmer than about Vienna,

which is itself situated to the north of the mountains of Styria.

The exhibition of works of industry and manufactures interested me. Cabinet work and works in leather were the best; but silk stuffs and small articles of luxury, on the other hand, were neither tasteful nor yet *finished*, as the English say, and as we know not how to say in German, because we cannot arrive at that point.

Yesterday evening I was at the theatre. The performance was the Hunchback of Notre Dame,—a piece imitated from Victor Hugo's celebrated romance, much in the same manner as an ape would imitate a man. Claude Frollo, for instance, was—Heaven knows for what reason—transformed into a criminal judge. This strips him of all interest at once. His ascetic, clerical life, occupied entirely with science and the contemplation of divine things, must have preceded, in order to make him conscious of the madness, of the horror, of his raging passion for Esmeralda. Claude Frollo, the criminal judge, conversant, from his vocation, with all the frailties and passions of men, cannot possibly fancy himself bewitched by the little gipsy girl; but Claude Frollo, the Archdeacon of Notre Dame, who, in the seclusion of his solitary cell, knows little of men, and nothing at all of women—he might fancy so, and act accordingly. In this manner every thing was turned upside down. The actors performed in such a

manner that the prompter had to play the principal character; and Esmeralda, who appeared not to have learned her part could not speak it: her thick, lisping tongue made a stout opposition to every word. Besides, it is always a lamentable sight to see an innocent young girl personated by an actress; even great artists fail in the attempt.

This morning we took a ride to the Emperor's bath; a large institution for bathing and drinking, about half a league from Buda. It belongs to the convent of Frères de la Charité, who, about two years ago, erected over the strongly impregnated sulphureous spring a rather heavy building, which contains drinking-rooms, bathing-rooms, and lodging-rooms for visitors. In the inner court grows a flourishing yucca, parrots squabble and chatter, musicians play upon the harp, the drum, and the tambourine; in short it has a very different look from a German bathing-place. But the country is most dreary.

Now, my dear brother, I must get on board the Ludwig, where I am to sleep to-night. So farewell, and good-night!



## LETTER IV.

TO MY SISTER.

Voyage down the Danube.

On board the Ludwig, August 27, 1843.

How different are the ways along which we travel forward in the course of our lives ! It is half-past eight in the morning, a brilliant blue sky, scorching sunshine, and already fiery heat. I fancy to myself, my dear Clara, that you are taking a leisurely walk in the cool, shady alley of Pymont, drinking the water according to prescription, and engaged in agreeable conversation with persons belonging to elegant Hanoverian society. I am sitting in my small, low cabin, on which the sun darts his rays, and the door of which is shut : have no view but through a couple of air-holes, called windows ; have great doubts whether I shall get any dinner to eat ; cannot step upon deck without bouncing against a wall of passengers' luggage, piled half as high as the chimney ; and am, along with four hundred persons, and three hundred quintals of goods, in this steamer, which is of no more than forty-horse power, and happens to be the very smallest of the twenty-two that ply upon the Danube.

But I am on the way to Constantinople, therefore in as high spirits as I heartily wish you may be, my

Clara. For the rest, if it is true that great part of the content of man arises from the comparison which he makes between his condition and the less favorable circumstances of his fellow-men, I must at this moment esteem myself most fortunate ; for half of the passengers, at most, have seats, and the others only just room to stand. The fair of Pesth occasions this overflow. This evening, at Mohacz, we shall be relieved from it.

And how happens it, you may ask, that I alone have tolerable accommodation? I shall have to pass nine days and five nights on the Danube ; and I was told at Vienna, by persons of experience in the matter, that I must engage a separate cabin, which is considerably more convenient than the ladies' saloon. I did so, and, in addition to the price of my first place, I pay ninety-five florins extra for this cabin from Pesth to Gallacz ; so that I have the best reason to be contented. I have a very convenient wide sofa with steel springs, a tolerably large table, upon which I can very well arrange my portfolio, and, over the dressing-table, even the luxury of a mirror. This cabin, situated on one side of the deck, is much more airy than the saloons below, and the machines work so quietly that I can write without any difficulty. This I never could do before in any steamer ; and it is a great satisfaction to me, because it will materially shorten the unavoidable *ennui* of the voyage. The

noise and tumult around do not disturb me in the least.

I slipped out just now to reconnoitre the general state of things. It is deplorable enough. In the ladies' saloon all is confusion; for, as the vessel has been going ever since four o'clock, before daylight, some are trying to sleep, and others to arrange their toilet a little. Restless children, weary of the confinement, increase the discomfort. In the gentlemen's saloon, which, as usual, is also the dining-room, they are breakfasting, and the atmosphere from so many persons, together with the emanations from coffee, chops, roasted potatoes, wine, &c.; the loud calls for what is wanted, the answers of the waiters, and the complaints of those who are kept waiting, make that place a tumultuous fiery furnace, from which I soon made my escape. On the deck, they are sitting jammed close together, and looking as compact as a wall. It is impossible to get a peep over all the black hats. Luckily, there is nothing to be seen but the long broad Danube, with its flat, bare, greenish-yellow banks. How they fare in the second places, I know not, certainly worse; for over that part of the deck is spread no sheltering awning. Here then I am again in my floating cell. . . . .

I have just made the discovery that, by cowering over the back of my sofa, I can contrive to make the small oval window serve for a frame, which cuts

little pictures for me out of the landscape, such as are commonly called still-life, and in which very little is to be seen. But on ship-board one must not be too particular.

Ah! I see a clump of alders on the swampy shore. The branches droop nearly to the water, and a stout willow stands entirely in it, so that the top alone projects above the surface. Some light yellow cattle, with magnificent horns, have come to the river to quench their thirst. Now they walk gravely back to the pasture, lay themselves down, and chew the cud just as gravely. It is a fine beast, the ox, but rather too much of a beast. The Potters are not to my taste.

Now I see a water-mill, such a mill as you never saw—a floating one. The mill-wheel, attached to a great barge, which bears the wooden hut of the miller, is turned in the middle of the river by means of the current. The miller and his man, dark, long-haired fellows, step to their door, wave their broad hats, and hail our vessel with a cry that is not intelligible to me. A third is coming in a tiny boat from the shore towards the mill. In this confined space they live day and night, while there is work, and that there almost always is. The flour is said to become of excellent quality on board these floating mills.

A great deal of wheat is grown in Hungary, I am told, but it is not good. It cannot be sent away, for the means of communication are wanting in the in-

terior of the country. Kukuruz (maize) is the principal food of the people. I feel myself involuntarily reminded of Sicily; not by the character of the soil and of the country—that could scarcely be more different;—but Sicily and Hungary have one trait in common—a stamp of the neglect of human hands, which gives them a desolate aspect. Even here, on the banks of the river, what death-like silence!—what solitude! What then must it be in the interior of the country, where immense plains, and vast morasses spread themselves, without being traversed by beaten roads. There are wealthy proprietors, and I have been told of some fine mansions with parks and gardens; but these are oases in the desert, scarcely attainable by a toilsome journey. And then these rich nobles of the Austrian monarchy have such numerous and such extensive estates, that they can visit but a very few—to say nothing of residing upon them. In Moravia, this struck me forcibly in comparison with Silesia. There the mansions and country-seats have a pleasing air of careful preservation, which proclaims that the owner takes delight in them, and concerns himself about them, because he lives there. In Moravia, on the other hand, on those vast possessions of prince Lichtenstein, for example, there are no marks of that beneficent attention: they are managed by a steward, or farmed, for the profit of the proprietor, but not for his gratification. The same may be the case in Hungary.

I can see nothing more. The river seems to bury itself in endless woods, not of large, old trees, but of alders, aspens, willows, which here uninterruptedly line its bank, and are in reality more wilderness than wood.

August 28.

It is miraculous, but true—we really had dinner yesterday. One table was served about one o'clock, the other about three. I sincerely admired the attendants, when, about four o'clock, we were rising from table, and some stragglers entered and desired to be supplied, the head-waiter begged them to wait a little, "For," said he, in the genuine Vienna idiom, "the women in the kitchen are half killed with the heat." To-day we are not so full, for yesterday in the course of the afternoon, and in the evening, at Mohacz, the vessel discharged some of her living freight.

Now and then we passed a hamlet, and wherever the bank became somewhat hilly, it was planted with vines. Of the market-town of Mohacz and its situation, I saw nothing: it was dark.

This is a remarkable place for the history of Hungary, and mediately of Europe also. On these marshy plains were fought two of those battles in which nations are opposed to nations. That in 1526 was unpropitious for the West; for the Turks, in the full tide of victory under Suleiman the Great, triumphed here over King Louis II, who fell in the fight, and then rolled forward, ever threatening,

ever ravaging, ever equipped for war, into the European provinces, Servia, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Transylvania, for a century and a half menacing the house of Austria in Vienna itself. In the battle of 1687, Prince Eugene of Savoy, the great conqueror of the Turks, here commenced as a young man his glorious career with a complete victory.

Yes, much could the Danube tell of the furious and sanguinary battles of all ages and of all nations. Here the Roman cohorts, nay, the emperors themselves, encountered the ancient unconquerable German tribes. Here the Huns pushed on their savage hordes, like beasts of prey, against the West; and Attila, the rudest of barbarians, was not far from marrying Honoria Augusta, the emperor's daughter. Here settled the nobler Goths, and hence marched the great Theodoric, to give peace for a short time to *his* kingdom of Italy, so much had the relative position of nations changed in the course of four centuries; the despised barbarian sat upon the throne of the Cæsars, more noble, more energetic, more powerful, than their degenerate descendants.

And again, after a revolution in the history of nations, Huns panting for conquest were seated here and harassed the German Empire by their invasions. At this time, it had one of those emperors, for whose sake nations learn to love sovereigns; the glorious Henry I, the annihilator of the Avars at Merseburg, and on the plain of the Lech, to whom the puerile surname of "the Fowler," is more be-

coming than to many another that of "the Great," because he united with undisputed greatness the rare gift of a simple spirit.

The roving hordes disappear; the nations settle themselves according to circumstances; the great ferment for gaining a footing in Europe is past. After all these contests for the soil, for existence agreeable to their own manners, for material interests, all at once there poured—and this time from West to East—torrents of men, who forsook the soil, gave up their own manners, renounced material interests, and inundated the East for a purely ideal object—to help to rescue the 'grave of Christ from the hands of Infidels. Here, along this Danube, marched one host of the fanatic multitude, without order, without inward or outward support, without any acknowledged, self-confident leader, whose mental superiority regulates and guides inconsiderate popular movements. Because a dove had once brought tidings from Ararat, and guided the Ark thither, Peter the Hermit gave the stupid multitude a goose and a goat for guides. To these God would point out the way; these they were to follow. They did so, and came of course to a deplorable end.

The eleventh century had sent forth aged men, women, and children, under the impulse of the chimeras of a blind religious zeal, out of Europe into the East; the East revenged itself in the fourteenth, when the invasions of the Greek Empire by the Ottomans



from Asia Minor commenced, and despatched hosts of warriors, who were led on by Sultans athirst for conquest. One of these was Bayesid Yilderim—that is, Thunder-bolt. He penetrated into Bulgaria and threatened Hungary. The French had formerly furnished the most numerous crusaders, and now, though the religious impulse was perhaps extinct, the impulse to acquire glory by military exploits was not. The flower of the French chivalry, with the Count de Nevers at their head, marched to the assistance of the Hungarian monarch. But, alas! they only plunged him and themselves into perdition. Their valour was carried to temerity; they despised every precaution, every warning, all advice. And if the sky were to fall, the doughty knights would support it with their lances. The consequence of their presumption was a prodigious defeat, lower down the Danube, near Nicopolis, the Emperor Trajan's "town of victory," in the year 1396.

The Turk now became the arch-foe of all Europe, which had great difficulty to withstand him, till, intoxicated by his victories, he sank into a lethargy which laid to sleep the vital principle. From this opium-stupor he roused up in our times, ashamed of himself, and dazzled by the splendid progress of European enlightenment. He too felt a desire to enter the ranks of the movement; he is now striving to do so. Who can tell whether and how far he will succeed? I believe not. From the kernel proceeds the fruit, not from the shell. From the inmost

life of a nation, from its moral, religious, and political wants, proceed its reforms ; such for instance, as were, in Germany, the Reformation, in England, the overthrow of the house of Stuart, in Sweden, the expulsion of the union-kings. But what want of the Musselman nation can furnish the ground for an innovation, which obliges its troops to relinquish the commodious Eastern dress, and to put on the inconvenient European uniform ? I pity the poor Musselman who is required to become thoroughly European, and yet has not the European nerve for it.

It is now nine in the evening, and for an hour we have been lying at anchor off Semlin. To-day we have kept almost constantly near the right bank of the Danube. This part of Hungary is called Slavonia, and appears to be a swampy country. We passed the ruins of Erdöd, which gives their surname to the Counts Palffy ; Illok, which belongs to the Princes Odescalchi ; Kaminicz, with its beautiful garden, extending to the river ; and, next, Peterwardein, which is said to be a very strong fortress, and in the Turkish wars cost much blood both to Christians and Mohamedans. You see nothing of it but the walls.

Sometimes the country is adorned with vine-covered hills, but in general nothing is to be seen but sand-banks, and the reedy shore standing half under water, as far as the eye can reach.

The state of the water just now is said to be quite

extraordinary: it is twelve feet higher than usual. Certain it is that we saw haycocks upon the trees. These stood up to their tops in water, and hay was carried to them in boats, and laid upon their branches to dry. Boats were also used to go to and from many houses, which are usually upon dry land; the tops of the grass peeping above the water, as in the lagoons of Venice, attested this. Several herds of white cattle enlivened the rich moist meadows, and wild ducks the reeds. Sometimes a solitary fishing-eagle darted down into the river upon his prey. One might fancy one's self upon the sea, so wide, so silent, is this mighty river. It is not beautiful, yet not quite destitute of charm: it is solitary as greatness.

We arrived here in the dark. Semlin is the last town of Hungarian Slavonia. The Save, which here discharges itself into the Danube, separates it from Belgrade, the first of Turkish Serbia; and thenceforward the right bank continues to be not Mohamedan, but under Turkish paramountship. I know not whether this is the proper term to designate the connexion between Serbia and the Porte; I fear not: but I cannot find one which precisely expresses that precarious connexion, which stands moreover under Austrian and Russian influence. Belgrade I should have liked to see. John Hunyades, prince Eugene, Laudon, so bravely defended or reduced it—the latter so lately as in 1789. But, two years afterwards, Austria, then involved in the

war of the French revolution, was obliged to cede it again. And now it is Turkish, and will no doubt continue Turkish. The high potentates choose rather that the Turk should possess it than one of themselves. This they call policy, and European balance of power, my Clara !

August 29th.

We keep advancing on our peaceful watery course. The company of the first place has dwindled to six persons, and the deck is free from passengers' luggage, so that one can move about. The weather is most lovely, very hot in the day, as it is fitting for summer, and refreshingly cool at night; magnificent sunsets and magnificent star-lit firmament. Of the earth you notice chiefly the wooded hilly Servian shore, because it is the finer of the two; and, on the Hungarian, the numerous little military guard-houses, wooden huts, in which Austrian soldiers keep watch, lest any one should cross over from Servia, on account of the plague. Should a boat or a man, nevertheless, venture to attempt it, they would be fired at without ceremony. This part of Hungary is called the Banat, or the military frontier, and extends to Wallachia.

Recollecting the Frenchman, who wrote from Hindostan, "*Je ne crois pas aux tigres, car je n'en ai pas vu*," I will not say the same thing of the notorious gnats of Golubacz, whose abodes we passed to-day without annoyance. On fine summer

evenings, and in the vicinity of water, there are gnats every where.

From Golubacz and the rock of Babakai, which shoots up, abrupt and solitary, out of the river, both banks gradually assume a rocky character, and here, about Drénkowa—I accentuate as the name is pronounced—where we have lain at anchor ever since four in the afternoon, the Danube resembles a small lake encompassed with rocks. Over these rocks the evening sun sheds his delicate and glowing tints: the lower wooded ones tinged with gold and green, the upper bright red, those at a distance bare, purple, and rose-coloured. A transparent cloud flying over us has sent down a refreshing shower, and a prodigious rainbow spans the whole sky, not like that “iron gate,” which we shall soon have to pass through, but a celestial one, through which one would fain fly on silver wings—as one wished a thousand times when a child—to heaven. But the Peri is not yet permitted to enter: no better, lighter, more peaceful world is yet allotted to her than this terrestrial world!

The whole western sky glows like fire: a delicate rosy veil hangs even over the rainbow, standing immoveably in the east, so that it looks as if illumined by ruby light. This I have never seen before. How bold is Nature in her fantasies! How inimitably does she execute all that she attempts! How incessantly is she inventing something new!

Man too would be more inventive in the domain

of art, in the creation of the beautiful, if he were not tied down by the bonds of custom, fashion, prejudice, habit, which are as invisible and infrangible as the cords with which the Lilliputians confined Gulliver. In times when custom was more simple, fashion powerless, prejudice undeveloped, habit independent of the influence of society, Art had more scope, more freedom. People, indeed, conceive that this is the case at present, because they have at command so much science and experience; but that is an error. Science and experience have their weak points, their prepossessions, their unconquerable prejudices, as well as the creations of a free imagination. If the rock for this latter was want of rules, that for the former is assuredly a superabundance of them. Are there still wonder-working men, like Murillo, for instance, painting freely and frankly a Madonna de la Servilleta on the table-cloth during the dessert by way of acknowledgment for dinner, and who can unaffectedly turn all they touch into a little work of art?

This just brings to my recollection a picture of Murillo's, which I have seen in the Belvedere at Vienna, and which is one of the most exquisite of his works, Clara—St. John in the wilderness, but as a boy. With what large, ominous, and yet touchingly child-like eyes he gazes into the future, while a seraphic wonder is diffused over his beautiful face! I believe, you must know, that man has

ominous presentiments of his inevitable future, obscurely veiled, as they necessarily must be, owing to the faculties which he has received; for passion mingles with them, reflection comes later, understanding analyses, doubt decomposes, and at last the cry is: 'There is nothing in presentiments!' Still, I believe in them. Not that they portend this or that particular circumstance: one cannot say positively, 'This will happen,' or 'Such a thing will befall me!' By no means. Only, at times, a thought, a longing, a certainty arises in your soul, which seems to have no connexion whatever with present circumstances, with your life as it is at the moment. You think nothing of it, you even forget it, and, behold! years afterwards, perhaps, it becomes very gradually clear to you that this strange impression, incomprehensible to yourself, has become the woof to the warp of your life. This you saw and knew at first, because the mind is not cramped in its free action by the fetters of time and space; only it was not clear to you, because the sensible world lay between the then and the now.

This is what I call presentiments, fore-notices, and with us every-day people they may be faint and rare enough. But, in strong and richly endowed natures, in such a soul as John's, I can conceive them to be of that intense energy which Murillo has expressed in this child. Looking beyond the sphere of his infantile existence, he

beholds himself in the wilderness, clothed in the skins of beasts, as a prophet pointing to the higher prophets, in prison, in death—and beholds it all with the greatest certainty, with the greatest simplicity, just like a child to whom you say, “You will once be an angel with golden wings and be with God Almighty,” and the child thinks it perfectly natural.

Whenever I see one of Murillo’s master-pieces, I cannot help repeating, “To no man whatever has the human soul so revealed itself as to him.” And what for us is the most extraordinary thing of all—he is not a clever painter—only an inspired one. The moderns are clever—that is, some few of them—very clever, acute, perspicacious, familiar with the inward life and its operation upon outward appearance, artistically inspired. This is a great deal in our days, when nine-tenths of the painters, of the poets, of the artists of every kind, make a paltry trade, a source of scanty livelihood, out of what ought to be a worship. For that Murillo-inspiration, the soul must be attuned to a different note, and for such a one as is no longer heard in the world. Genius sleeps, talent wakes. Whoever is at this day under twenty-five years old, has to a certainty *one* considerable talent. Talent feeds and fattens: it seems to be a kind of disease, which people must have in their youth, that they may rest from it in their age. All are desirous to attain the highest degree of technical ability; in



this way genius is stifled, and so technical ability becomes the acme of talent. This system will be carried to such a length that we shall conceive an aversion to talent, because we shall find that it makes the possessor rather stupid. I appear to myself like Hoffmann's "Johannes Kreisler." Out of pure love for music, he will not hear any, because it is not performed to his mind. Poor Kreisler! did he not go mad? Yes, yes, that is quite natural; whoever has ideas, has assuredly a fixed idea among them, which may become so fixed, as to kill all the others—and this is madness. Sometimes, however, we most unjustly call those fixed ideas to which our own are opposed, but which they cannot extirpate. This ought to make us indulgent, not impatient, as is too frequently the case.

Orsowa, August 30th.

Yesterday, I vagabondized in what I wrote to you, my dear Clara: to-day, I shall stick to the Danube.

Thick fog covered the river, when we left the Ludwig at Drénkowa, and proceeded in a covered boat with nine rowers. But, as the sun rose, the fog sank, and the lighting up was as exquisite as the admirable scenery deserved. Unluckily, I did not see it entirely as I could have wished; and, during the seven hours' passage, I frequently regretted that I had chosen to go by water. The magnificent land

route, a road formed by blasting the rock, a *Via mala* in miniature, which is only a few meadows distant from the bank, must afford a much wider prospect than our close-roofed bark. But we were enticed by the wish to see the falls of the Danube, and to make acquaintance with their dangerous whirlpools by passing through them. Unluckily, I must say, the water was so high that we scarcely perceived them. There appeared, indeed, in two places, across the whole breadth of the river, small curling ripples, from which the existence of invisible obstacles might be inferred—nothing more; neither did we hear anything of the mighty roar of these falls. After this there is nothing to rouse the Danube from his imperturbable repose, and he never puts off the character of the most imposing majesty—like Jupiter, knitting his brows and shaking his locks to produce storm and tempest. And in these profound wildernesses, in these undisturbed solitudes, the Danube could not be uneasily agitated, without disturbing the whole impression.

Hemmed in on both sides by rocks, the river here is not above five hundred feet broad; prevented from spreading itself, it is urged forward with rapid current—rapid but not impetuous. The rocks are of surprising beauty, abrupt as crystal in their forms, with declivities and ravines as suddenly precipitous as in the mountains of primitive formation; with green cataracts, as it were, of the most beautiful

wood pouring down them, dense, full, crisped, heavy. The towering peaks, the scooped out ravines, the perpendicular walls, are tapestried and carpeted with a luxuriance of foliage such as I can figure to myself in the primitive forests of America, and as I never before saw. It is uncultivated Nature in her greatest beauty : it is her triumph, for she suffers nothing to be wanting, neither the majestic beauty of the Rhine, nor the soft beauty of the Moselle, nor the romantic beauty of the Neckar—none.

The sky was of a deep azure, and troops of eagles were slowly circling around the summits of the rocks. The silence of the wilderness reigned. The woods slept, magnetised by the powerful rays of the sun. We entered a defile, where general Veterani with three hundred men once arrested the advance of the Turks. We passed the flat rock, upon which the name of the emperor Trajan tells of the ancient glorious exploits of the Romans against the nations of the North. I thought neither of Veterani nor of Trajan ; but only of the Forest-woman of the old Tales, stalking with long, light step, drawing a green train after her, with great, waving curls, and an eagle upon her head ; gazing around with large piercing eye, whose glance is so powerful, so irresistible ; and saying, without words, by mysterious signs, "Come to my solitude ; forsake the toil, the trouble, and the disquiet, of the world without ; peace and freedom are here—what wouldst thou more, O man ?" Nothing, oh nothing whatever, so

long as the spell lasts which that glance has thrown over you ; but soon this is no longer sufficient, and when you are once out of the magic circle, you cannot help asking, "What then art thou doing here, Forest-woman? Thou art the offspring of paganism, and must give place to civilization, which tolerates no old Tales." This occurs to me now, I ought to say, it did not in the morning.

I sat—only think! on the top of the arched roof of the bark, *à la Turque*, in the broiling sun, not very conveniently; but such sights one sees but once in one's life and never again: one must, therefore, make some effort for the sake of them. The Banat shore was somewhat disturbed by the numerous guard-posts. That looks so hostile. Are there then enemies, where there is scarcely a single man? One, however, we did see on the wild shore of Servia. Alders stood in the water; the wild vine clambered up them, and beneath sat, in a very small boat, a Servian, in the picturesque costume of wide, dark-blue, fluttering garments, with broad red belt and red fez. Whether he was fishing, or whether he was doing nothing, we could not discern. At any rate, he formed a picture apart, in which life was otherwise expressed than in that of great majestic Nature.

About one o'clock, we arrived here and found a very tolerable inn. Here is the frontier of the Banat: first a small stream, then a bit of swampy meadow—neutral land—and then begins Wallachia.

When you have passed this frontier, you are *en contumace* for Europe; and if you wished to return up the Danube, you must clear yourself from the suspicion of plague, by performing quarantine in the neighbouring village of Szupanek. We ought to have immediately taken the first vehicle we could get, and driven off to the baths of Mehadia, to which a capital road, as I am told, takes you in two hours and a half, and which are particularly interesting on account of their immense supply of water. As we omitted to do so, we were obliged to confine ourselves for the afternoon to the environs of this place.

The hills are still extremely beautiful, though not quite so steep and precipitous as before. Tinted by the many-coloured lights of evening, they acquired a new charm. The place itself is absolutely destitute of attraction, without gardens, without fields. Here is grown some kukuruz, there stands a walnut-tree, yonder a whole thicket of elder, and there a thorn hedge, inclosing what looks something like a kitchen-garden, and all wearing an aspect of decay and neglect. And yet men dwell here, who were not born for Orsowa, who have lived in the world, and are acquainted with the luxuries of society: bound by their official situations, they *must* dwell here. Ah! how painful may be that necessity!

A place that struck us is the *skela*, a double fence of laths along the Danube, where the Turks on the

water side and the Hungarians on the land side traffic with one another, without daring either of them to touch their commodities. Officers of the quarantine stand between the two fences, and convey the money from one side to the other. The small fortress of New-Orsowa, on an island, has a Turkish garrison and looks at a distance not very commanding.

On board the *Zriny*, August 31st.

This is an unsent letter, my dear Clara. I write down at the moment what I see and do. If I were to wait till I had finished my voyage, and then to give you one continuous report, that might be clearer; but I dare not venture to do it, for, in truth, I am afraid of forgetting incidents. They are not, it is true, either very abundant or very extraordinary: I do not travel too fast for the eye to grasp them; but everything is so different, so totally different!

How our *Zriny* is manned! The captain, a most agreeable man, is a Dalmatian; the crew consists of Wallachians. The chief mate wears the Albanian dress, of which I had yesterday a transient glimpse on the Servian in the boat, and which, I am told, is very common in these parts, namely, wide bagging dark-blue breeches confined below the knee, short jacket of the same colour, the sleeves of which are slit at the wrist, and provided with small buttons, so that you can see the white shirt-sleeves, and the

crimped muslin ruffles. Dark blue gaiters descend only to the ankle, leaving the foot exposed ; and this, in white stocking and woman's black shoe, looks extremely smart. Belt and fez are a deep red. Whether it is the dress, whether it is the way in which the man wears it—sometimes with a touch of swagger, sometimes coquetting with his well-dressed moustaches—in short, he makes himself charming, and reminds me of Andalusia.

Our sailors, it is true, are the reverse of charming, though they are all well-grown and well-shaped ; but they are filthy in the extreme. Their dress is a shirt, with dark-blue or red stars, worked upon the seams by their wives ; breeches of light-grey woollen stuff with a blue stripe at the seams, gaiters in the Albanian fashion, and bare feet. With superfluous clothing they do not trouble themselves in this hot weather.

The principal articles of female apparel are a long-sleeved chemise, likewise worked with red or blue at the seams, a large white handkerchief over the head, and two woollen aprons with stripes of different colours, the one hanging before, the other behind, sometimes fringed at the bottom. I tell you, never was anything like it seen, even on the stage.

Before we start, I am running over the list of passengers, and find in it, to my great astonishment, Sultana so and so, with her children, but in the second place. For us a Sultana is a being something like the phoenix, so fabulous and poetical : it scanda-

lized me, therefore, not a little, to have to seek her aft by the kitchen. But this Sultana seemed to make herself quite happy there: she was a squab, elderly Greek, with a fur cap over uncombed hair, which corresponded with her title as well as a turkey-hen with a bird of paradise. In this manner everything is strikingly different—costumes, names, objects.

Early this morning we again proceeded in our boat, and in two hours rowed from Orsowa to Skela Cládowa, entirely on account of the falls. At the point called the Iron Gate, a certain boiling of the water was indeed perceptible, and the rocks were again of high and stern beauty. Steamers would be able to go down the river, in spite of its falls and whirlpools—so I am told, and some are said to have made the attempt; but it is too troublesome a job to get them up the river again, as they must be towed by horses or oxen.

The rocks subside before you reach Skela Cládowa, and the river and steamer resume their undisturbed course. We went on board the *Zriny*, which is kept in a state of delightful English cleanliness and order, and first passed between the remains of Trajan's bridge, of which we could perceive no vestiges, but the relics of the two end piers standing upon the shore. This bridge was the first and the only one that ever spanned the Lower Danube. It was erected by Trajan, and demolished by his successor Hadrian. It would appear that Hadrian,



who had a real passion for building, could not endure any edifices but his own.

The wretched straggling Wallachian village of Kalafat, where we lay to for a moment, is not without interest. Here is to be had the best caviar, which, when eaten fresh on the spot, has a very different flavour from that prepared in winter, which comes to Germany. Caviar is the roe of the sturgeon, for which a considerable fishery is carried on in the Danube. At a tolerable distance from the bank, in the river, stand half naked people immoveable about a sturgeon, or in default of that, some other fish, to catch it with their hands. This occupation demands infinite patience and address. But large nets, spread for a long space in the river, proved that they do not trust to their hands alone.

At length we passed the fortress of Widdin, which is situated on the Servian side, in a large plain, and, with its numerous white minarets, produced a very favourable impression as the first Turkish town we had seen. A minaret is really a very graceful object. A tall pillar, surrounded by a gallery, and above that, running up to a very small point. Sometimes it reminds you of a ship's mast, at others of a flower-stalk, with the yet unblown bud, but always of something elegant. A hideous contrast was presented by the palace of the pacha, a long, mean building near the Danube, irregular, of wood, decaying, deserted. Its small harem, inclosed with

a wall, having cane blinds before the windows, stands contiguous to it, and outside the suburb is a gipsy encampment composed of tents.

This singular houseless race, which has no abiding place on earth, and no where leaves permanent traces behind it, roves about in great number on the Lower Danube, on both banks. These people live only in tents outside the towns; in winter, in holes underground, or in caves and woods. They subsist by begging and stealing, musical performances and tinkering: some are good blacksmiths. Most of them are Christians, following all sorts of pagan customs; as to others, nobody knows whether they belong to any religious communion or not; they are like the beasts of the desert, wild, unruly, and free, having no intercourse with other men, among whom they cannot bear to be. Nobody knows what is their origin—nobody can form an idea whether they are susceptible of any civilization. They pass on mysteriously through ages, as if enveloped in a dark cloud.

Missionaries and Bible Societies venture to penetrate to the most savage tribes of Africa, Asia, and Australia—the gipsies they do not venture to visit. The gipsy is abandoned to his fate, and the only notice taken of him is to oblige him to pay a tax; namely, a ducat per head every year. According to the account of a German settled at Jassy, who had been our fellow-traveller from Pesth, this tax is in-

roduced at least into Moldavia, where there are half a million of gipsies. The rich boyar is exempt from tax—not so the gipsy. Is not that extraordinary! They are divided, like the ancient Romans, into sections of ten, one hundred, five hundred, and the chief of the five hundred is held responsible for the tax. Thus all that these people know of the state of human society is the burden which they are forced to bear. However, they enjoy a right: a horde of gipsies must be allowed to stay three days wherever they think proper to pitch their camp, though, bearing a very bad character, they are almost always unwelcome. Yes, I have to-day beheld Turkish and gipsy abodes face to face. Still stranger phenomena will come by and by.

September 1.

It becomes tedious to me to name all the places which we pass. Indeed, the Danube itself begins to be tedious, growing broader and broader, and the Wallachian bank, to which we chiefly keep, having a most miserable appearance. Hovels, gray, and no higher than mole-hills, without tree or shrub—these are villages; and the town of Giúrgewo; off which we are lying at anchor, on account of some business, and which we have just visited with ungratified curiosity, is far from looking like a Silesian village. Wallachia stands like Servia and Moldavia in a certain subordinate relation to the Porte, which dates from

the times of the great Turkish conquests, but has indeed since suffered great modifications and changes, the more the Turkish power has declined before that of Russia and Austria. Formerly, they were obliged to pay an enormous tribute, and then were not safe from predatory invasions. Hence the desolate aspect of the country at this day: people would not cultivate it, because they were in constant fear of the enemy and of pillage.

Since the independence of Greece and the Russian war with Turkey, these countries have been placed on a footing of greater security and freedom—with respect to Turkey, that is—but interhally they have not thereby become independent. The boyars have the right of electing their hospodar; the Porte is obliged to confirm him. There is no end to the struggles of the various interests and parties, to cabals and intrigues. The new hospodar of Wallachia, Prince Bibésco, has just set out for Constantinople. Whether the boyars will hereafter permit their hospodar to exercise a beneficial activity upon the country—whether he is disposed to do so if he can—whether he will not always be forced by internal and external circumstances to trim, in order to keep himself uppermost—whether the fate of Poland. . . . this is a threatening resemblance which has occurred to me; but it must occur to every one.

Giúrgewo looks like a vast heap of rubbish and filth, above which a roof rises here and there. A

number of fresh passengers are coming on board : I must have a peep at them. Till to-morrow, my Clara !

Gallacz, September 3d. On board the Zriny.

The arrangements for the navigation of the Danube, are, indeed, too tedious. There ought to be one line of steamers organised for passengers without stopping till they reach Constantinople, and another for goods, which might stop according to occasion. We arrived here yesterday evening at six o'clock, and shall not start before noon to-morrow—forty-two hours thrown away !

The day before yesterday I broke off abruptly. Our good captain had sent for some Turkey coffee for me : it is not amiss. The bean is pounded quite fine, and then boiled somewhat like chocolate. As people here have not yet had the ingenuity to devise substitutes, this coffee, which is drunk out of very small cups, is strong and invigorating. For us it was sugared, which is not the Turkish custom. Our new fellow-travellers were some Wallachian officers, who looked perfectly European in their blue and yellow uniforms ; and some ladies, who looked, I may say, hyper-European, so *outré* was their costume. One of them, for instance, wore not only a gown with a train of extravagant length, but a heavy, wadded, woollen mantle, which trailed after her, and looked really unsightly. Another, a small, insignificant person, could scarcely get free from all the folds of her gown, shawl, and ribbons. She

appeared as if she had not done growing, but was, nevertheless, the mother of five children, and married at eleven years of age!!

A Turkish inspector of customs, of high rank, and his attendants, filled our Zriny to such a degree that I thanked Heaven I had my solitary little chamber.

The Turkish gentlemen wear brown coats braided, of the European cut, and the red fez with a blue tassel. This is neither fish nor flesh, neither national Turkish, nor modern European, and forms a tasteless medley. Of the vaunted Turkish dignity in attitude and demeanour, I have found nothing. The walk of the inspector, whom I have just mentioned, was a waddle, and he tottered when he stood still. Of his attendants two only, and those apparently the lowest menials, wore turbans of variegated shawls; the others were dressed like himself. At Braila, and here, on his arrival, there came persons on board to pay their respects to him, and kissed his hand. No gentleman here crosses the street unattended; a servant must follow, and, if he makes pretensions to elegance, in Greek costume. And what does this Greek carry after his master? In one hand the pipe, in the other the kantshu. A mongrel between Turk and Cossack, trimmed up with French polish—that is what a Wallachian gentleman seems to be.

Yesterday we landed at Braila, called by the Russians Brailow, and by the Turks Ibrahim. This

is the fortress, the reduction of which, conjointly with that of Varna in Bulgaria, in the last Turkish war, opened to the Russians the way to Constantinople. People here in general are of opinion that bribery effected its capture. I have no hesitation to believe it. In Turkey, corruptibility is a very ancient taint, and a very natural consequence of Oriental despotism. Providing against the contingency of falling into disgrace without precisely losing his head, or of getting the cord, a man seizes every occasion for amassing wealth, which, in favour or disgrace, is always a serviceable thing. Now, to say nothing of the bribery, it seems to me a most astonishing self-denial of the emperor of Russia, that he did not proceed to Constantinople, and show to the city of the Byzantine emperors, and of the Ottoman sultans, the step of a victorious czar. After the peace, the Porte was obliged to demolish all its fortresses at the mouth of the Danube; in consequence; nothing is to be seen of that of Braila but part of the walls.

This town is seated on the high bank of the river, and is said to have a considerable trade, so that great commercial houses of Trieste have agents here. It is not handsome, paved only in places, very incompactly built, with vacant spots about the houses. The most connected part is composed of wooden stalls, which form two or three long wretched streets. The goods seem to be of the simplest and lowest kind—coarse stuffs, articles of

leather, provisions. Children and calves were capering about among them ; and Jews called after us. We soon made our retreat.

Here, in Gallacz, it is somewhat, but no great deal better. We have discovered some very pretty houses with gardens, in our two hours' ramble through the town. I say discovered, for hovels, wood-piles, cattle-stalls, are all huddled together around them. I felt really sorry for these neat dwellings, with their bright glistening windows, in such motley company. There is said to be a tolerable hotel here, and the exterior is not amiss ; but I preferred remaining on board our *Zriny*, and therefore can give no opinion of a Wallachian house of public entertainment.

To-day is Sunday. The flags are hoisted at all the consulates, and produce a cheerful effect : most of the shops are shut ; but the Jews are following their avocations. One of them was holding an auction in the public street, and in mountebank style praising his wretched cloths ; and great numbers were seated with small counters before their house-doors. Let a place be as filthy as it will, the Jews invariably find means to make themselves look still filthier—and even here ! The people produce a most melancholy impression, being in reality but a scarcely perceptible step above the beasts, scantily clothed and ragged. A whole circle of them had gathered round a dancing bear, and were highly



diverted. The bear was really the most civilised of the whole company. He was no longer, it is true, in the complete rudeness of the state of nature, he had learned to dance; but they—nothing. And then, what fare they subsist upon! I am far from believing that gluttony is favourable to the development of mind, or that a Vitellius can achieve great things in any other line than gormandizing; but one who is annoyed by permanent hunger will never unfold genius.

I was watching a fisherman to-day. He gave me no trouble to do so; for five hours he remained on the same spot in his boat; whenever I looked, there was he still! He was fishing with a line, which he had wound round his finger; the hook was driven about at the mercy of the current. What was his breakfast?—a raw head of kukuruz:—his dinner?—grapes, so unripe that they were like green peas. Here, the nauseously sweet water-melon is what potatoes are with us. Potatoes are unknown; they are a foreign and most extraordinary production. Of course, the unripe fruit eaten in great quantity, together with the unwholesome exhalations of the marshy shore, generate in summer, on the Lower Danube, pestilential fevers, which sweep away the poor, neglected inhabitants.

I am growing more and more impatient to leave the Danube; still I must confess that I never found myself so well and so comfortable on any other like

occasion, as I have done during this voyage. The uncommonly fine weather may have contributed to this effect. To-day it has changed; and now we are just coming to the inhospitable Black Sea. I had certainly rather be with you at Pyrmont, my Clara.

---

## LETTER V.

TO MY MOTHER.

Voyage through the Black Sea—Entrance of the Bosphorus.

Constantinople, September 7, 1843.

HERE I am, dearest mamma, here I am! This morning, about eleven o'clock, we dropped anchor in the Golden Horn. The full beauty of the Bosphorus surrounds me, and to this the golden apple seems to me to be due. To look out now, in this tranquil moonlit evening, is like a dream sent me by some beneficent fairy. The soft cupolas of the mosques, the elegant minarets, the tranquil cypress groves, every object that rises above the valleys, and stands out from the hills—for here, in the city itself, are hill and dale—is bathed in bluish vapour. Night rests upon the valleys, but it is enlivened by a countless multitude of lights glimmering in all the diminutive houses, which to my European eye

appear dwarf-like as card-houses. Dull sounds still ascend hither from the harbour, and now and then is heard the barking of a dog. If the latter does not exactly belong to a fairy dream, it belongs to Constantinople.

Well, I am here at last; that is the grand point. The passage hither was not the most agreeable : the whole vessel full of Turks, Jews, and bugs ! Charming fellow-travellers, don't you think ? and yet, excepting the third sort of passengers, very entertaining ones ; for now, my dear mother, it is not merely the costumes and the physiognomies that are new, but the manners and customs, and consequently the ideas also—for the former are the offspring of the latter. The deck of our extremely dirty and untidily kept steamer, the *Ferdinand*, which started at noon on the 4th, was almost entirely occupied by those passengers ; but a barrier parted them from the small space allotted to the first place. These people brought with them bag and baggage, sought a spot for themselves, spread out a mat, upon that a carpet or a mattress, added a coverlet, pulled off their shoes, and clapped themselves down. Water-melons, a water-jar, bread, cheese, and the beloved pipe, in short all that they needed for housekeeping, surrounded them ; and, as a Turk who supplies coffee resides permanently in a cabin of the *Ferdinand*, nothing was wanting to their comfort, for they care not about exercise. Their habit of inaction

was a fortunate circumstance; for, though they could, it is true, stand up, there was no room for walking.

To me, I must confess, this inaction is inexpressibly repugnant, when it does not arise from the dominion of mind over the body. In moments of the most intense mental occupation, the body is sometimes paralysed, as it were—this I can comprehend. But people to whom the world of ideas is hermetically closed appear to me stupid, and any thing but dignified—as one so often hears them called—when they sit like porcelain images on our mantelpieces, and smoke. Smoking might be an independent movement. An expert smoker of a cigar looks not amiss; he takes it up, he throws it down; he is not its slave; he smokes it merely for his pleasure; but here they have no cigars, nothing but pipes—pipes as long as the man, with very small red earthen bowls, and a clumsy mouth-piece of amber, lying like a bladder outside the lips—pipes, the heads of which rest upon small plates set on the floor before the smoker, who is absolutely fixed behind them, for how can he stir with this whole apparatus?—in short, pipes that transform him into a smoke-machine.

I am convinced that this incessant smoking has deteriorated the Turkish character. It may always have been disposed to the stationary: tobacco has rendered it stagnant. When it was introduced into Constantinople, in the first years of the seventeenth

century, the Sultans prohibited it, upon pain of the severest punishments. It was to no purpose; the practice spread with incredible rapidity. Now, the Turk is a slave to his pipe, and smoking is the business, the pleasure, the end and aim of his life.

There sat one, with a green shawl about his turban: he moved not an eye-lash for hours together. Formerly, none durst wear green but those who belonged to the family of the Prophet; now, all may who have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. I have observed but one Turk say his prayers—that was the coffee-man. Suddenly stepping across the barrier to the first place, because there was more vacant room in it, he left his slippers behind him, turned himself with his face towards the south-east, towards Mecca, and performed the ceremony of prayer in such a manner that I could not help admiring the incredible suppleness of his limbs. For it is not sufficient to kneel down once for all; but, after prescribed pauses, which he fills up with silent prayer, he must sink down on both knees and both hands, touch the ground with his forehead, and gently and lightly raise himself again. Difficult as it is to perform this movement rapidly and expertly, he acquitted himself to admiration. At the conclusion of the prayer, the Mohamedan must pass his hand over his face, that every trait of hypocrisy may be banished from it—is not that excellent?—and, lastly, make an obeisance to the two angels who stand by him when at prayer. This my coffee-man

did punctually. But the two angels beside every one who prays are a delightful emblem, are they not?

I observed also the morning prayers of the Hebrews, chiefly in the person of an old man, who, in spite of his snow-white beard, looked decidedly the reverse of venerable. With a leathern thong, he fastened a black case containing the ten commandments about his grey head, twisted the end of the thong round the fingers of the left hand, threw a striped woollen covering over his head, put on a pair of spectacles, and began to read assiduously in a book, at the same time moving the lips silently, but violently. When he had done praying, he carefully put away those things, after he had devoutly kissed each of them.

When you closely observe these customs, you cannot help asking, how it is possible for men to hate or to despise one another on account of these forms, as they have all sprung from one fundamental idea, that of purifying and elevating the soul. But you likewise ask yourself, it is true, whether one form is better than another. Does not the Catholic kneel like the Mohamedan? does not the Protestant read like the Hebrew? is not bending the knee, like prayer or hymn book, an expression of the same devotion, paid to the same God? We may possibly find that one form is better suited than another to our individual feeling, and therefore the right one

for us ; but whether it is the only right one before God is assuredly much more than doubtful.

I am of opinion that travel and residence among foreign nations are not particularly favourable to orthodoxy : one melancholy consideration in this is, that orthodoxy, the belief prescribed by human laws, is invariably confounded with faith, which is a faculty not dependent on the law, but on the convictions of the soul. Orthodoxy inoculates the inner man with certain laws. Faith is an emanation from the inner man. The one resembles the essence which you drop upon an artificial flower to give it a scent ; the other is the scent of a natural flower.

There was a Turk on board, with his wife and two children. Few Europeans would pay such attention to his family as this man did. In spite of his pipe, he was up every moment to do something or other for them. The wife was muffled up in a dark cloak and a white veil, for it would have been shockingly indecent to show her face in the presence of strange men : but, as no stockings are worn, and blue wide trowsers reach at furthest only to the middle of the leg, this is exhibited with an unconcern which, with us again, would be shockingly indecent. When they walk, the Turkish women wear yellow slippers ; when they sit down they take them off. When they go out into the street, they first put on yellow boots, like the men's, and slippers over them—both of Morocco leather. It is easy to imagine what

clumsy feet, and what an awkward gait must result from these practices.

With this motley company we started at last—yes, at last—on the fourth day. About a league on the other side of Gallacz, the influx of the Sereth into the Danube forms the boundary between Wallachia and Moldavia; and, a league on this side of Gallacz, the Pruth forms that between Moldavia and Bessarabia, so that the left bank very soon becomes Russian. The villages, and the military posts in particular, now looked somewhat human; but the banks continued to be swampy and overgrown with reeds, and chiefly inhabited by pelicans and herons. About five o'clock the pleasure of advancing was suspended: off Tultscha we anchored, that we might enter the Black Sea in the day-time, on account of the numerous sand-banks. Tultscha is a small town of Bulgaria, on the right bank; and Bulgaria is completely subject to the Porte, not merely tributary, like Servia, Wallachia, and Moldavia. Russia has manœuvred so cleverly, as to get possession at the mouth of the Danube, of a small island off the right bank, so that, at the point where the river discharges itself, it has Russian posts on either side.

I now skip two days. We had a storm for twenty-four hours, and the waves and the rain dashed with such violence upon the deck and over the poor Turks, that the water found its way down below. It was miserable; but last night the weather



was calm, and we were again well and lively; and this morning, about nine o'clock, we had the inhospitable Black Sea behind us, and were entering the Bosphorus. The Bosphorus! this is one of the favourite points of Universal History where, on imperishable material, she engraves imperishable recollections. Here Jason navigated with his Argonauts, to secure the golden fleece in Colchis; here Godfrey of Bouillon, with his crusaders, to rescue the holy sepulchre; here Mohamed the conqueror, with his hosts eager for war, to overturn the throne of the Greek empire by the power of the Crescent. A sorceress conducted Jason, a sorceress who had at her command all arts and all powers, excepting only the decisive one—Medea was not loved. An angel conducted Godfrey of Bouillon, protected his heart, and kept his soul humble, so that he was content with performing his task; with recovering the holy sepulchre, and desiring nothing for it but the pleasure of conscious success. A gloomy genius conducted Mohamed—one of those who stand at the landmarks of epochs, brandishing a sharp scourge over that which is passing away, and giving to that which is commencing a grave example, a lesson which, by the by, the Ottoman epoch in Byzantium has not understood. And thus mysterious powers rule and govern around all the extraordinary phenomena in the history of mankind, and happy is that from which the angel has never departed!

Those were strongly marked figures and times

which came to meet me from those hills, out of those waters. Besides—what a tumult ! armies, fleets, nations ! Greeks and Persians, Genoese and Ottomans, all fighting against each other, all struggling for the goods of life, for the sovereignty of the world, staining the goods with blood and the sovereignty with tyranny, striving long to attain it, enjoying it for a brief space, and then drawn down into the great irresistible whirlpool of the past, on which nothing floats but here and there the ruin of a name or of a deed. But these ruins are here grander than those of Palmyra or Carnac can be. The whole mythology of ancient Greece was here overthrown, precisely where it had its most splendid temples ; and out of it all, Prometheus alone still lives, but in another form. Every age has had its Prometheus, and perhaps the old martyred Titan yonder on the Caucasus closed his wearied tortured eyes for ever, when Moses opened his. For every dispenser of light is a Prometheus, and he is not so sure of anything as of a hard rocky bed.

Where once stood those glorious temples, groves, and altars, all is now desolate ; the entrance to the Bosphorus is extremely grave. It is marked by fortifications, light-houses, ruins of old castles. At the very first step East and West encounter one another with no very friendly aspect. They seem to be measuring each other's strength, to decide which is to be lord and master. "Thou wouldst be dead but for me," says the East ; "the principle of all

life, light—the germ of all civilization, religion—proceed from me as rays from the sun.” “But I,” replies the West, “have carried out that principle, have brought the germ to blossom. Thou art dead, as the flower which withers after it has scattered its seed. I live, for in me there is movement.” Benificent Nature gradually appeases the strife. “O ye fools!” says she; “did not Ilium fall in the East? Did not Byzantium fall in the West? In the presence of such witnesses, can ye quarrel for a perishable dominion! O ye fools! God alone is the Lord, and into me he has breathed his all-ruling power.” And then she begins to develop that power in surpassing loveliness, and to display a luxuriance of vegetation, which is quite unique on a southern coast, and not to be matched in Spain, Sicily, and Italy.

Near Buyúkderé commences more especially this glorious greenery. In broad, bold masses, rise sycamores, evergreen oaks, pines, cypresses, walnut and chestnut trees, from the crest of the hills down to the blue sea; they stand in groups on detached overtopping eminences; mingle in the gardens with fig and laurel, pomegranate and citron trees; fill the ascending ravines as with green waves; impart to the landscape a freshness, a shade, a repose, that form a delightful contrast to the ever-moving sea, which, in the hot sunshine, seems to throw out flames, and to the numberless villages, hamlets, villas, which, gradually becoming larger and larger,

and closer and closer, succeed each other without interruption as far as Constantinople. There the splendid scene reaches its highest point in the Seraglio, an Isola Bella in a grand style—in the style of the East.

---

## LETTER VI.

### TO MY MOTHER.

Situation and aspect of Constantinople—The Streets—The Cemeteries—The Sultan—The Caiques—The Celestial Waters—Turkish Women.

Constantinople, Sept. 8th. 1843.

I THREW down the pen yesterday, dearest mother, though I had not given you anything worthy to be called a picture. It is too vast, too rich, too diversified, to be comprehended in a single glance. To-day I will make the attempt.

Between the last ranges of the Hæmus or Balkan, on the right, and of the Taurus, on the left, that is, between two mountainous shores, the Bosphorus makes seven windings, from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmora. Before it opens into the latter, it deeply indents with one arm the European shore, and thus forms the harbour of Constantinople, which is called the Golden Horn, and looks like a river. On a triangular tract between the Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmora or Propontis is seated the city

of Constantinople, on several hills—the Seraglio on the extreme point near the sea. On the other side of the Golden Horn rise the suburbs of Galata and Pera—the latter is the Frank quarter—over hills of considerable height. On the Asiatic side, consequently separated by the whole width of the Bosphorus, lies the suburb of Scutari; and all these towns, united into one vast whole, are so situated that, land where you will, you have a hill to climb and a pretty steep one too. There are, therefore, several hills, and these do not belie the character of the Bosphorus: they are green; they are covered with countless groves of cypresses, and groups of plane trees. Above these rise, like swans above a green sea, the glistening cupolas of about three hundred mosques. Near each stands, like an unearthly watchman, at least one slender white minaret, frequently two, even four, and at Sultan Achmet's six. Under and among the trees, as in a wood that has been thinned out, lie the houses, all, excepting the residences of the ambassadors at Pera and some few palaces belonging to the government, of wood, even that of the Grand Signor, the barracks, the cannon-foundry, the habitations of the pashas; many painted with the most glaring colours, white, light red, light yellow; others embrowned by time like the houses in the Oberland of Berne; others again, especially those of the Catholic Armenians, coloured black and dark gray. In small, narrow streets, they climb up the hills, and each

has, if possible, its garden; if not that, at least a terrace with flower-pots and with a pomegranate or fig-tree; and, if that too is wanting, with a vine before the door, which runs up to the roof, falls down again in drooping branches, and sometimes throws its arms across the street in the form of a festive garland. As schools, baths, kitchens for the poor, are connected with the mosques, these two must have their gardens for recreation. The abodes of the dead, which here occupy almost as much space as those of the living—the cemeteries—are situated among the streets, and form those cypress groves; for all the Turkish burial-places are profusely planted with trees, and never with any other species. Indeed, the cypress, pointing immoveably upward, is a charming emblem beside a grave. There are, moreover, small, separate places of interment of celebrated men, of scholars, monks, saints, of private persons and their families. These invariably consist of a small cypress grove, surrounded by enclosed arcades, so that, on looking between the railings, you can see the green above the walls. You will easily comprehend that, with the sloping situation of the city, the whole appears like a garden, like pleasure-grounds.

I expressly say, *appears*. Figure to yourself a theatrical decoration, painted by the hand of an artist with exquisite taste. You are struck, you are delighted, with the incomparable scenery; you cannot take your eyes from it; you cannot admire it

enough. You are then led behind the scene. Gracious Heaven!—nothing but laths, spars, dirty paper, cords, daubs of oil, coarse canvas—such and precisely such is Constantinople.

I have been more struck with the excessive disorder than even with the excessive filthiness. That the streets are very narrow, very crooked, very steep, is their least fault: owing to their narrowness the kennel in the middle is much more inconvenient, but what a pavement! That of Seville is an elegant floor compared with it. Your parasol sticks fast every three steps between these enormous stones, roughly huddled together, and your feet every ten. As the street slopes too much towards the middle, your step is in fact never firm, for, on account of its narrowness, the slope begins close to the houses. Thus you proceed with difficulty enough. But beware of treading on one of those frightful, mangy, half-wild dogs, which have no notion of getting out of your way, and are therefore very often kicked and trampled on, and then fill the air with their howlings, and which are continually meeting your eye in the most repulsive way. Here is one bringing her litter into the world, there is another suckling hers; yonder lie several dead ones; or they run along under your feet, or are snarling and biting one another. In short, if Constantinople were inhabited by dogs alone you would find it hard enough to get along in these streets, where heaps of filth, rubbish, dung, melon-

parings, of all conceivable and inconceivable things, form barricades, especially in the corners.

But now, take care! there come horses carrying on each side a leather bottle full of oil, and quite covered on the outside with the same. O, pray take care! here comes behind you a whole train of asses, heavily laden with building materials, bricks and planks. Step to the right, out of the way of those men, carrying large baskets of coal on their backs; and now to the left, to avoid those others, who, four, six, or eight together, are carrying bales of goods or casks, of such weight that the two poles as thick as a man's arm, to which they are slung, bend under it. Let not the braying of the asses, the cries of the dealers in confectionary and chestnuts, the howling of the dogs, the warning call of the porters, confuse you; but follow your dragoman, who, with the haste of business, and accustomed to these impediments, strides on before you, and is sometimes hid from your view by the crowd, sometimes in turning round this or the other corner.

You come to a cemetery. It is well known in Europe what reverence the Turks pay to burial-places; how they visit them, and never suffer the dead to be dislodged, as with us, after a certain number of years, to make room for others. In idea, this is very fine; and, when we figure to ourselves the cypress groves, in which white tombstones are set up in the green turf—the whole makes



a solemn and impressive picture. Now, behold the reality ! The greensward is trodden bare, the tombstones stand awry or are thrown down, broken ; wretchedly paved streets run through them ; here sheep are grazing, there asses are waiting, yonder geese are gabbling, cocks crowing ; on this spot they are drying clothes, on that a carpenter is at work ; while a train of camels is advancing on one side, a funeral procession is approaching on the other ; there children are playing ; there dogs are fighting ; in fact there is shown the utmost indifference—an absolute profanation of the tombs. True—whoever was buried here four hundred years ago still lies on the same spot. You may conceive what cemeteries these must be, and what a prodigious space they must occupy. Yesterday—to me it was really remarkable—to reach the hotel of Madame Balbiani, which is in a very airy healthy situation, at the very highest point of Pera, we had to pass through two cemeteries ; the house itself stands in a third, and our first walk was to the fourth and fifth, called “the little” and the “great cemetery.” From the latter there is a magnificent view of the Bosphorus, but all the most conspicuous buildings besides the mosques are barracks.

To-day I have seen one of the greatest curiosities of Constantinople, the sultan, as he returned from the mosque of Beglerbey to the palace of the same name. A sultan ! What an idea of power, grandeur, pomp does that word convey. To ascertain in

how far Abdoul Medjid answers this idea, I stood up in the street by the Turkish drum—just like the street-boys in Europe. The street was strewed with sand, and a file of soldiers in European uniforms drawn up. Four superb saddle-horses of the sultan's, led by grooms, opened the procession; then followed at least a dozen old pashas or officers of the court, all in the well known brown surtout, with a red fez, and upon fine horses; among them a real monster, the Kiskar Aga, the chief of the black eunuchs. Then a pause—and at last, all alone, came sultan Abdoul Medjid, in a long dark blue cloak, above which appeared his pale inanimate face. He rode very slowly; the band received him with an ear-rending "God save the king," the soldiers shouted a scanty *Vivat*. Not a smile deranged his features, not a ray lighted up his eye—a salute is of course out of the question. Some thought his look firm and imposing; I found it only cold, passionless, glassy. When he approached the group of Franks of both sexes, he made his horse caper just a little, perhaps by way of expressing his notice of their salutation. The finest things about him were incontestably the diamonds sparkling on his fez and at his breast. I hear that he has the epilepsy, or nervous attacks, or too large a harem. In short, he looks neither like a powerful sultan nor a healthy young man.

The palace which I mentioned is situated on the Asiatic side, so we were obliged to cross in a

caïque. This is certainly the most inconvenient sort or boat that I ever met with. In the first place, unsafe from its construction, and secondly calculated only for Turkish figures, which double themselves up, like pocket-knives, whenever they sit down, for which reason they are all bow-legged. You must either cower on a scanty carpet or lean cushion on the bottom of the boat, or lay yourself down flat, with your head only above the edge. The rowers sit in short wide linen trousers, and shirts with muslin sleeves, for their work is hard. Notwithstanding their light clothing, they are bathed in perspiration, and hands, face, breast, and legs are so embrowned by air, sun, and wind, that the whole man looks as if he were carved out of old oak. His features are in perfect correspondence, hard, sharp, distinctly marked, not so broad and flat as with us. At the places where you get into these boats, there is always a great tumult, because fifty rowers offer their caïques, and because you must always bargain about the price. This is the custom in Turkey, just the same as among us. Considering the number of Greeks, Slavonians, Ionians, Albanians, Armenians, Jews, and Franks, living here, this is not at all to be wondered at. Frank is the general name, under which the Turks comprehend all Europeans, and Frankistan that for all the countries of Europe. Their Christian subjects, for instance Armenians and Greeks, they call rayas, and Giaur, infidel, is the contemptuous designation of the

Christians in contradistinction to the Mussulman, the true believer.

As we were on the Asiatic side, we proceeded higher up the Bosphorus to Göcksu, the "Celestial Waters." Where a streamlet discharges itself into the Bosphorus, there has formed a somewhat undulating meadow, on which are scattered the most magnificent plane-trees, elms, and oaks. This is called the Celestial Waters, and is a favourite promenade of the Turkish ladies, who yesterday, being Friday, came thither in considerable number—the most distinguished in carriages. There they sit, on carpets spread upon the ground, in parties, and amuse themselves as well as they can, with eating sweetmeats, chatting, but only with one another, smoking, and veiled to the eyes and the bridge of the nose. Men also resort thither, but in smaller number, and they too sit together and smoke, without seeming to take any notice of the women. You meet, nevertheless, with both sexes at public places, so that the women are not completely cut off from the society of strangers of the other sex. These groups under the trees have a most characteristic appearance, especially, I should think, in a picture. In the reality, amidst free and beauteous Nature, they are rather inanimate and heavy, for I find this everlasting squatting on the ground most ungraceful, I might say monstrous, for you never see more than half of the human form. But it is well for the

women when you see them only sitting: what a gait, what bandy legs, what feet turned inward! I should wish them to have, not a dancing-master—only a drill-sergeant, that they might not waddle about so hideously. It is better that they should sit.

The oxen are then taken from the carriages that they too may lie down on the grass. Some slight refreshment is unpacked and spread upon the carpet; and in this manner they vegetate for half the day. Children, prodigiously gaudily dressed, then show a little more activity than their mammas; and dealers in sweetmeats, fresh water, fruit, walk among the seated groups and offer their commodities for sale.

The carriages, drawn by oxen and called arabas, are droll to see. They are painted with all the colours of the rainbow, gold yellow and fiery red predominate. You mount behind, by means of small steps, and sit sideways on mattresses—eight or ten females together. Two light yellow-gray oxen, with mirrors and tinsel in front of their heads, draw this lumbering machine at a slow pace, walking under a sort of portable triumphal arch, which belongs to their harness, and is adorned with innumerable red tassels. A servant, with a cane, walks by the side and guides them. Another on horseback frequently accompanies the vehicle. Even ladies of the sultan's harem come to Göcksu in arabas.

The trip upon the Bosphorus leads past an almost

uninterrupted series of villages or houses. Their numerous windows, covered by very slight wooden blinds, give them a rather cage-like appearance. They are extremely small, the upper floor projecting, in general entirely, sometimes but partially, beyond the lower, so that they look very airy. In winter they must be barbarously cold, for already the incessant north wind which blows from the Black Sea is so fresh, and the breakers occasioned by it on many points of the coast are so furious, that in rowing against them, it is necessary to have a man upon shore, to tow the caïque with a rope through the current.

Now, my dear mother, has not this day been interesting and perfectly Turkish?

---

## LETTER VII.

### TO MY MOTHER.

Glance at Aya Sofia—Sultan Mahmoud's Tomb—St. Irene—  
The Serai and the Palace of Tchiragan.

Constantinople, September 9th, 1843.

ONE letter on the heels of another!—I always think. To-day I will send off the whole packet, and always keep adding another leaf. To-day, my dear mamma, I might write you something interesting, for I have been in St. Sophia and in sultan

Achmed's mosque, but for too short a time, and shall therefore reserve what I have to say about them. You will be surprised that I should have accomplished this so soon, as one must have a firman for the purpose. Prince Bibesko, the new hospodar of Wallachia, has one, and his brother, his retinue, and his country people avail themselves of it. Among the latter, there is an amiable couple living at our hotel, and in that way the thing was managed. There was a prodigious cavalcade, all men on horseback, some of them mounted on very fine animals, with gold embroidered housings, others on hacks; a host of servants, and plenty of interpreters; for each had brought his own along with him, to obtain all the information he could; other travellers, who joined us on hearing whither we were going; and, at the head of the whole party, the kawass. This is the man whom the sultan gives for a guard on such occasions; all the ambassadors have one besides, for his presence commands respect for those under his care. The Wallachian lady and I were put, as a matter of honour, in spite of some resistance, into a horrible vehicle, called *coci*—as for Turkish orthography, I don't concern myself about it and spell just as I hear the words pronounced—that is, a small coach, in the shape of a gondola, which has no springs—but, to make amends, gilt lattice-work doors; no seats—but an oval mirror in each corner; no falling steps—but a red ladder. On the bottom,

scantily covered with straw and a thin carpet, we sat outstretched, complaining bitterly; for we were not driven carefully and deliberately, after the Turkish fashion, through the rugged streets, but at the European full trot, to keep up with the horsemen; and a servant ran by the side, and held the carriage in the worst places. On the other hand, we had the satisfaction to ride in a gilt, though rather dingy coach.

Unluckily, our whole cavalcade was somewhat too tumultuous and disorderly. We rushed into St. Sophia between twelve and one o'clock, precisely at the time of prayer, and were instantly ordered out again. The kawass remonstrated, but to no purpose. An aged priest raised his arms, ejaculating, in a tone of lamentation, "Allah! Allah!" We were obliged to retire. A boy was going to strike me with his rosary; but my mother's daughter was not born to submit to blows: she threatened so majestically with her fore-finger, that the urchin sneaked off in affright—which amused me much, as he was at least twelve or thirteen years old. I could not abide permanently in this country—not endure the contempt with which the Mussulman looks down upon the Giaur. Such is my nature—if any one is polite to me, I am quite as polite; if any one is haughty, I am ten times as haughty. I should get into quarrels here. As we were rattling along in our coci, some Turkish women inquisitively peeped in, and one of them made with her hands a gesture



indicative of contemptuous abhorrence. And to such a country as this have I strayed! Well! I wished to see Turkey: that trait is assuredly Turkish.—So, about the mosques another time!

Our wild troop poured into a building which, in its external architecture, really corresponds with the ideal conceptions that we form to ourselves of the Oriental style. Sultan Mahmoud's tomb is beautiful as a fairy creation. The tomb is the grand concern of the Orientals. Therein is expressed the unquenchable longing of man to live beyond that handful of years which is called life. This longing for an after-existence has, certainly, a too material character, when we contemplate the Egyptian pyramids, the most colossal of all royal sepulchres—that may be, but here it takes a certain spiritual turn, and that touches me wherever I find it. Almost every one of the earlier sultans built a mosque, and ever since the days of Haroun al Raschid it has been a law with the Mohamedans to add a school to it. The Ottoman sultans, extending the boon, founded baths, habitations for poor students, kitchens for the indigent, fountains, in addition; and among these beneficent institutions erected their tomb, mostly consisting of a rotunda. Hospitality, attention to the wants of travellers, is a principal commandment of Islam, so that whoever founds a well in the wilderness or a fountain in the city has performed a good action, because water in the East is something rare and precious.

Only one fountain is attached to sultan Mahmoud's tomb; but it is the most graceful structure in Constantinople. In the centre, between two octangular pavilions, stands a circular colonnade, connected with both by a gallery. The whole is raised by four steps, and, like the latter, is of snow-white marble. The apertures for windows in the two pavilions, the galleries, and the spaces between the columns, are filled with iron lattice-work most exquisitely wrought and gilt, so that you see nothing of the building but tissue of gold upon the marble, and, through the railing, the rose, myrtle, and jessamine hedges of the little garden.

In one of the pavilions stands the sarcophagus of sultan Mahmoud : a magnificent, gold-embroidered, velvet pall is spread over the coffin, and seven costly shawls, four striped in all colours, and three with a white ground, are laid upon the pall. The red fez, with blue tassel and with a sparkling sun of diamonds, stands at the head, and about it is wound, almost like a cravat, the eighth shawl, the most beautiful of them all, white, adorned with elegant garlands of flowers. A balustrade of mother o' pearl incloses the sarcophagus. Others of the same kind, but less magnificent, smaller, without jewels, containing the remains of persons of his family, daughters, sisters, are also placed in this pavilion. The walls are of marble, and texts of the Koran, in gold letters, a foot long, form the frieze, a most graceful arabesque on a green ground—a light apple-green; that is the

sacred colour, for Mohamed's colour was green, like the earth over which it aimed to spread itself. The pavement is covered with a fine straw mat. But something tasteless, something incongruous, could scarcely fail to be there. The interior of the cupola is painted with ugly, glaring colours, and near the door are two large brown clocks—and they *go* too, in this place, where the earthly division of time has lost its significance!

The other pavilion is a kiosk—a summer-house—of the sultan's. The hall in the middle is erected over the spring, and five gilt railings between the pillars part it off from the street. To each of these railings four gilt cups are fastened with gilt chains, and every one who wishes to drink holds forward a cup into the hall, where a man is engaged all day long in filling a gilt can at the spring, and replenishing the cups of the thirsty. These are expected in return to say a prayer for sultan Mahmoud's soul. I have described this little monument so particularly, because it is the first that I have found, as well in spirit as in execution, perfectly Oriental. In all Europe I have not met with anything bearing the least resemblance to it.

I said just now that something tasteless must be introduced, and that is true enough. This something is always something European, a foreign element, that has thrust itself in, and now maintains its place—no matter where. Under the protection of the firman, we also saw the Sublime Porte, the

palace of the grand vizir, where the business of the State is transacted. Hence the name is derived. The ancient eastern kings sat to administer justice before the gates of their cities or of their residences, in order to be accessible to all. The Oriental, in his fondness for comparative images, figures to himself the complicated State as a building, the ingress and egress to and from which the sultan governs like those ancient kings, and has hence adopted for the whole State the short designation of the Porte. The assembly of the Ottoman council of State is called Diwán, that is, dæmons, genii, because councillors of State are thought to possess demoniac intelligence and activity. Collections of poems are also called Diwán, because it is presupposed that they are the inspirations of genius.

This palace of the Sublime Porte is an entirely new building, of stone, with columns and flights of steps of white marble. The staircases, and all the passages and floors, are covered with fine straw mats, on which you walk very softly and agreeably. The apartments are mostly spacious. Opposite to the entrance are the windows—an unbroken line of window as in hot-houses—and beneath them is the sofa, composed of single wide cushions, covered with fine silk stuffs, worked with gold, silver, or velvet. There are, moreover, in a few of the rooms tolerable mirrors, and in the others nothing—absolutely nothing. These might have something grand from their simplicity, if the walls were not painted

by wretched European decorative artists with landscapes, which, petty and hard, and doubly mean beneath the besilvered and begilt ceilings, attract the eye of the stranger, because they are in such harsh contrast with all that surrounds them.

In the hall where the council of State is held, there is in one of the walls a gilt lattice-work, which looks as if it inclosed an alcove. Behind it, on a rose-coloured sofa, the sultan attends unseen the meetings of the Diwan. I believe it was Suleiman the Great (1520-1566) who adopted this method of overhearing and controlling the Diwan, and the succeeding sultans found it convenient, and entirely relinquished the presidency of the council to the grand-vizirs, so that these ruled, not they. Sultan Mahmoud, who was, at least, desirous to do his duty, is said to have assumed the presidency again in person; but sultan Abdoul Medjid is too strongly entwined by his harem, as by a thousand-headed hydra, to follow the example of his father; and the sultana Validé is inclined to the old state of things and has great influence over him.

Female rule is no novelty here. The sultana Chasseki (the favourite), and Validé (mother)—there is no sultana consort, for a sultan has no women but purchased slaves, who, by beauty, intrigue, or the birth of sons, raise themselves to favourite, sometimes to the sole favourite;—well, those two classes of sultanas have often enough governed the empire from the harem. And not only under weak

sovereigns and in times of decadency, as for example, the lovely Venetian Baffa, the favourite of Murad III., and the high-spirited Greek Kossem, favourite of Achmed I., who, both in the seventeenth century, abused their power, and both lost their lives by insurrections. Even Suleiman I. the Great, the conqueror, the legislator, was so enthralled by his beloved Russian Roxelana, that he caused his two sons by another slave to be put to death, that he might ensure the throne to her child. Possibly a woman who is a slave must resort to so many arts, devices, and intrigues, before she learns at length to weave nets too strong to be rent, and in the use of which, in a more independent position, she would not have been so skilful.

I can imagine how a harem becomes a hot-bed of all bad qualities, the germs of which lie dormant in the character of woman. Always surrounded by rivals, always encompassed and watched by those hideous monsters, the eunuchs, always unoccupied; jealousy, envy, hatred, love of intrigue, a boundless desire to please, must spring up and take possession of the soul. One is anxious to conquer the hated rivals—that is inherent in the nature of every woman: and let people say that women in the East are accustomed to the harem, and that habit renders every thing endurable, nay, easy, this is one of those trite, half-true phrases. Yes, their necks have been bowed to the yoke of the harem, and they have become accustomed to its forms, but their instinct

struggles against its nature—I will not say their conscience, for that may waken in but few—no, instinct, irrepressible, almighty. As it is not tempered and governed by any culture of mind and heart, how can it avoid leading to the most violent explosions, to the lowest vulgarities, to the greatest cruelties! The harem is the very place for spoiling the character of woman, and it is a pity that it is covered with a veil impenetrable to European eyes. I hope, it is true, to gain admittance to a harem, that I may see Turkish females unveiled in their own house, and at the same time observe their behaviour to strangers; but, how things go on there every day, how the women agree together, how far the authority of the legitimate wife—for excepting the sultan, the Turks have one or two legitimate wives—extends over the slaves, and these too may attain the honour of favouritism with the master—this must remain a mystery. Perhaps it conceals cruel and melancholy secrets.

At any rate, the harem has produced *one* fruit which has essentially contributed to the decline of the empire, namely the education of princes, or rather their existence, in it. To prevent wars between brothers, family feuds, insurrections of relatives, Mohamed II. made the execution of brothers and kindred a law of the State for every sultan on ascending the throne. Thus Selim I., on his accession in 1512, caused two brothers and five nephews to be put to death, and Mohamed III., in 1595,

nineteen brothers, not from particular cruelty, but in cold blood in virtue of the law, that they might not disturb the government. When, after the seventeenth century, the times became less sanguinary, less steeped in horrors, the princes were kept from their cradle in the harem, that all ambitious and high-spirited ideas might be totally eradicated among eunuchs, women, and slaves, and that the sovereign might have nothing to fear. Their apartment in the harem was called the Princes' Cage. From this cage, when the reigning sultan died, his successor was taken, of course utterly inexperienced, without any knowledge of men, things, or circumstances, quite ready to vegetate upon the throne, as were the other princes to continue to vegetate in the Cage to the end of their lives. Sultan Abdoul Medjid also was brought up in the harem; his father, it is said, did not wish to have an able successor. On this soil, nothing vigorous, I might say nothing healthy, can grow.

We also flew through some barracks, of which I remember nothing, but that there were some miserable horses in the stables; through the Mint which is now building, and the machinery and implements for which have been ordered from England; and through an arsenal, in which are preserved rare ancient arms, the precious keys of the gates of Constantinople, and the hand-weapons of the earlier sultans. It was once the church of St. Irene, but the cross form and the cupolas have been obliged to give way to the new arrangements. It contains the



grave of St. John Chrysostom. This building, as well as the Mint, is within the walls of the Serai : we endeavoured to penetrate further, but were told that the company was too numerous to be permitted to visit the interior. To me this was a great disappointment, and doubly so because it would have been matter of perfect indifference to nine-tenths of the party whether they could see it or not. They might at most have been enabled to make comparisons, to decide whether it deserved to be placed beside Windsor Castle, or the Palais Royal, or any other royal palace, but they would never have thought that this was the very Serai of the grand signors, and that it stood on the same spot which the great palace of the Byzantine emperors anciently occupied. However, I could not send them away, and so I must wait for some other favourable opportunity.

Besides this Serai, which is the winter residence of the sultans, and surrounded with embattled walls, above which magnificent cypresses rear their heads, there are several other imperial palaces destined for summer residence : that of Beglerbey, on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus ; Bekshishtash, which is building, and Tchiragan, which is just finished on the European ; besides palaces of sultanas, aunts and sisters. When these are mentioned, one feels surprised at never hearing of any palace for brothers or cousins, till one recollects that these unfortunate beings, if their lives are spared, must linger out their days in the Princes' Cage.

The palace of Tchiragan, elevated upon white

marble steps, stands, with its long colonnade of white marble, overlooking the Bosphorus. It is no regular palace, but an agglomeration of numerous pavilions, totally differing from one another, connected by galleries and terraces. But this fantastic irregularity pleases the eye, because the architect has had the skill to give a certain harmony, a coincidence, to the whole. And then the white marble produces such a fine effect between the blue fore-ground of the Bosphorus and the green back-ground of the rising hills; and the two great gilt iron gates look so handsome and so imposing! It somewhat cooled my admiration, when I learned that this remarkably beautiful building was of wood, like all those inhabited by the Grand Signor. At a distance, you take it of course to be marble. As we passed very near to it to-day, we could perceive the wood by the paint of different colours laid on some of the pavilions, and by the exquisite lace-like galleries, which, curiously carved, run round the roofs of others. Wood is the universal building material here. It is considered as more salubrious, because the Bosphorus produces damps, which, in a brick or stone house—without chimneys, after the Turkish fashion—would be prejudicial to health; and in earthquakes, which are here so frequent, light wooden houses are certainly less dangerous.

## LETTER VIII.

## TO MY SISTER.

The Sweet Waters—The Armenians—Armenian Women—The Kiosk of the Grand Signor at Alibegkoi—Sketch of Turkish history—Legend of King Solomon.

Constantinople, Sept. 11, 1843.

I CANNOT manage to write every day, my dear Clara. I get tired here—but tired in an overwhelming manner. The distances are great, the exertion of working your way through the streets with a whole skin is still greater. In the caiques a European body sits very uncomfortably, and in the carriages here still more so; and at last, when you come back quite fatigued from rambles of several hours, you have still to climb this hill of Pera to get home. Pera stands on the summit of a hill, around whose foot Galata and Tophana expand themselves, where there are places for landing or embarking, to cross over to the city or to go any where else. There is another in the suburb of Cassim Pasha, and yesterday we chose it for taking water to visit the harbour, having as yet been only at the mouth of it in the Bosphorus. It makes a most beautiful curve into the land, and is at last transformed into the "Sweet Waters," the rivulets Barbyzes and Cydaris discharging themselves into it. These "Sweet

Waters," on the European side, are on Sunday as favourite a promenade for the Armenian women, as the "Celestial Waters," on the Asiatic, are on a Friday for the Turkish.

The Armenians are a peculiar people, spread all over the Levant as bankers and merchants, who have attained considerable influence here in particular by great wealth and great pliancy; for all the financial business of the State is transacted by the Armenians. The pashas, for example, farm their government to Armenians, who pay their taxes into the exchequer of the State, and then contrive, God knows how, to collect them again and of course with profit for themselves. Not much good is said of them. According to report, they are adepts in all sorts of artifices and intrigues, and more artful and crafty than the Greeks. There was once a kingdom of Armenia, between the Caucasus and the Euphrates, which the Persians conquered. The people afterwards dispersed, and externally they have adopted precisely the habits and manners of the Turks—the same way of living, the same costume, the same veiling of women—but no harem, for they are Christians. Some profess to belong to the Catholic church, most of them to the Armenian. They have their own churches and convents. In the streets, the Armenian women are distinguishable by their dark red slippers, from the yellow ones of the Turkish women, and the black of the Jewesses. The Armenians wear black kaftans and large, black

globular head-coverings, which lie flat upon the forehead. Their houses are painted externally a dark colour, to give them a mean look, while great luxury often pervades the interior.

Passing to-day a half open door-way, and seeing some particularly beautiful roses beyond it, I stopped to look at them. A young man immediately made his appearance, and invited us in. In the court were seated two old gentlemen—wealthy bankers as our dragoman told us—in the dress described above, on low straw-bottomed stools, smoking in silence; they rose at our entrance, desired European chairs to be brought, and coffee and pipes offered. Though we declined the latter, we were obliged to sit down, and had abundant leisure to admire the roses, which shot up in pillar-shaped bushes to a considerable height, in the centre of the small, exceedingly clean, court-yard, paved with large flags.

I premise these particulars concerning the Armenians, as there is a great deal of talk about them just now, because, about a fortnight ago, one of them was beheaded with great privacy. He had gone over to Mohamedanism and married a Turkish woman; he afterwards repented and intended to return to the Christian faith, or had already done so. For this reason his head was struck off. That a rigid government prevails here is not near so frightful to me as that its proceedings should be so secret. A man has committed some offence, away he is whipped, one scarcely knows how.

For the rest, the Armenians, at the beginning of the last century were once wholly expelled, on account of a love intrigue in which one of them was engaged, "who was of an amorous temperament, and possessed powerful means of conquest, in the flexibility of a pair of high, bushy eye-brows." Is not that most amusing? The Armenian clergy then retired to Venice, where they founded on the Island of San Lazaro the well known convent, which is still famous for the books that it prints in numberless languages. That they could not do here without the Armenians is proved by the position which they have since regained.

The Armenian women are reputed to be very handsome, and, as they are permitted to unveil abroad if they please, I hoped to see a sample of their charms. But Sunday had not enticed many of them out. One large party sat together upon carpets and on the cushions of the araba, and were exceedingly amused by a mountebank, who, accompanied by a merry-andrew, displayed great dexterity in his sleight-of-hand tricks. For five minutes, one may look at such things with pleasure; but here they seemed to have made arrangements to watch them for hours; they drank coffee, ate sweetmeats, and the men smoked with as much gravity as if they were Turks. Perhaps because men were present not one woman was unveiled. I tasted some of the confectionary that is everywhere offered for sale; it looks better than it tastes. It is mostly

sugar-candy in cakes and balls coloured with rose and orange water, excessively sweet and nauseous. Then almonds stuck upon a very slender stick, and coated with a sugary jelly-like substance—also nauseous. On the contrary, the fruits preserved with sugar are excellent. But they are not carried about, like the things just mentioned, on large circular boards; they are ranged for show in the shops, in a tasteful manner, under bells of rose-coloured and white crape, adorned with flowers. I also like the black, bitter, Turkish coffee, especially after all those sweet things.

At length, 'we came to an unveiled group of females, which certainly looked picturesque enough. To the strong boughs of an elm was attached a swing formed of cords, in which was seated a young female, whom two women servants alternately kept in motion; while an elder person squatted on a carpet under the tree, and played mechanically with small stones. The dragoman requested permission for us to approach nearer and to look at her dress, which the lady on the carpet readily granted. She rolled herself to one side of it; I seated myself by her; the young person, hastily leaving her swing, squatted down by me, the servants behind us, and then commenced, by means of the dragoman, a conversation, which might have been listened to with interest in any drawing-room in Europe—we talked about dress. What pleased them most about mine was my blue veil, but what struck them most was

my *lorgnon*, through which they looked with such curiosity as if they expected all at once to see sky-blue trees and a green sky. Their dress was the indoor costume of all Turkish ladies: wide trowsers; a very close, long gown, slit into three aprons, as it were, the foreparts of which are drawn through the belt and form a sort of tunic; very narrow sleeves which, likewise slit up, hang down to the knees, but can be closed by means of buttons; no shoes, the one with stockings, the other with none, and on the head the red fez with blue tassel, with a broad band of yellow silk *filet*, resembling lace, fastened with glittering pins to the superb black hair, which fell in half braided tresses, and in parts quite loose, over neck, bosom, and shoulders. The material of their dresses was muslin of the most gaudy colours, lemon yellow, rose, and a stuff which is made at Brusa of silk and cotton, and has more sober colours. As both ladies, especially the elder, were strikingly handsome, they looked to me, beneath the brilliant sky, on the greensward, in the sunshine, like magnificent tulips. The elder had wonderfully beautiful black eyes, and a soft animated look. Her features were delicate and noble, but her face and still more her figure were broad and corpulent. The features of the younger were not regular, but her complexion was fresh and delicate as the morning red; she had small, handsome, light-grey eyes, with narrow, straight black eyebrows—but a look hard and spiteful enough to frighten one. The



former only it was that looked to me like a tulip—the latter like a beautiful wild beast. Their hairpins and rings were of base metal, consequently they themselves were but of inferior condition. Persons of the higher class wear, I am told, very costly jewellery. They showed no shyness towards the men, and at last they proposed to give me a swing. I concluded that the conversation was exhausted, and we took our leave.

If some hundreds of such females had been collected at the Sweet Waters, and especially in that delicious meadow behind the Grand Seigneur's kiosk, they would certainly have presented a most charming view. On this occasion, there were but few pedestrians, and a number of cattle were grazing there undisturbed. The meadow is divided lengthwise by a straight canal, lined with stone, along which water ran to the front of the kiosk just mentioned. There it falls over marble steps into a basin, on the two sides of which rise small marble temples adorned with gilding. The most magnificent trees, planes, evergreen oaks, maple, elms, large and majestic as our beeches, border the canal and surround the meadow. The little buildings beneath them look like children's toys, and one might envy the sultan, who comes every year with his harem to this country residence.

But, see! what is that floating yonder upon the canal? What shapeless mass is borne along by the ripples towards the marble basin? A disgusting

carcase, a dead horse, my dear Clara. To such encounters you must accustom your organs of sight and smell. Dead rats, mice, cats, find their last resting-place on dunghills and heaps of rubbish; and when, floating on the Bosphorus, you are amusing yourself with the frolics of the dolphins sporting on your right, the swollen carcase of a dog bears down upon your left. At first, I felt qualmish; but 'tis of no use. That is the way in this country. Mould and marble go hand in hand, and if you can bear the sight of a State that is mouldering, you may surely bear to look at the body of an animal in the same condition.

The Ottoman State has been founded on conquest, ever since Osman, at the foot of Olympus in Bithynia, formed with the wrecks of the Seldjukes a small independent Turcoman empire, in the last days of the thirteenth century. His son, Urchan, commenced the conquests made in Asia Minor from the Byzantines, took from them Brusa, whither Hannibal of old fled, to rouse the East against Rome; took from them Nicæa, where the first great council of the Church, in the year 325, under Constantine, established certain dogmas; took from them Nicomedia, the ancient capital of Bithynia. Sultan Urchan founded the "new troops," *Jeni Tcheri*, janissaries, as we call them—with Christian youths, taken captive and converted to Islamism, thousands of whom were yearly made prisoners or stolen, and educated at the same time for war

and Mohamedanism—the formidable infantry, which, for three hundred years was at the head of all conquests, and became the pillar of the State, till the middle of the seventeenth century, when it began to recruit out of itself, came to be in a manner hereditary, and lost its vigour, when fresh blood ceased to be infused into it.

Urchan's eldest son, Suleiman, first gained a permanent footing in Europe, by the reduction of Gallipoli on the Hellespont, in 1357; and, under his son and successor, Sultan Murad I., (1359—1389) began the long series of European conquests with the important city of Adrianople, while those in Asia Minor were equally brilliant. Such was the career of the Turks, more and more impetuous, more and more irresistible, more and more alarming for the whole West, and especially for the unfortunate Byzantine emperors, who gradually beheld their extensive dominions shrink within the compass of the walls of their capital; till, at length, Mohamed II. took Constantinople in 1453, and removed his residence thither from Brusa. This is the first and most vigorous period of the Ottoman empire.

The second, which lasted about one hundred and twenty years, is the most brilliant. Sultan Suleiman I., who took possession of all Hungary, and laid siege for the first time to Vienna, raised the Crescent to the height of its glory, and the grand-vizir, Mohamed Sokolli, who inherited the ambi-

tious spirit of Suleiman, maintained it, under his son, at that elevation. The destroyers of greatness now sprang up: indolence and fondness for pleasure in the sultans; love of splendour and profusion in the whole court, and in the grandees, which rendered them greedy, and laid them open to corruption; the confounding of court-offices with offices of state, to which latter were raised favourites who were only fit for the former; the intrigues of the harem; the sanguinary government, and the sanguinary change of the grand-vizirs. This is an epoch of seditions, vices, abominations, in which the first murder of the sovereign, that of the unfortunate Osman II., at the age of eighteen, was perpetrated with circumstances of horror; while his brother, the ferocious Murad IV., caused about one hundred thousand persons to be slaughtered in the space of sixteen years.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the third, the bloody period gradually ceases. Then come *great* grand-vizirs—the Kuprili; Achmed, who took Candia from the Venetians; the noble Mustapha, who took compassion on the state of the Christian subjects. But the energies of the empire had been misused and wasted by incessant bloodshed. By the peace of Carlowitz in 1699, the Porte was obliged to cede Hungary, Transylvania, Podolia, the Ukraine, Dalmatia. Its days of conquest were past, and that civilization which had hitherto developed itself was limited to a participa-

tion in European politics and diplomatic intercourse with all powers.

But the last century, the eighteenth, has produced great events and great men, and yet—I know not how it is, but to me it appears to present evident indications of decided, irremediable decline. Thus too it is in Turkey. The Sultans, no longer ferocious tyrants, are fond of feasting and building. The times enervate themselves with opium, tobacco, superb furs, to such a degree, that the internal disturbances, which never cease, become quite languid. In the wars with Russia, the Porte was always, invariably, worsted. This is the fourth, the *languid* period.

In the beginning of this century, when sultan Mahmoud II. put to death his uncle Selim III. in 1810, and exterminated the janissaries in 1826, commenced a new one, for which I have yet found no name, for the regenerated I cannot call it. Islam is a religion of the sword; its watchword is victory or death. Thus was it at first propagated over the trembling earth, and this was the time of its victory, of its life. That has ceased, and next comes, according to its own watchword—death. I figure to myself that the empire is sinking under a slow, very slow, decline, always incident to enervated organizations. In this melancholy state it may linger on for a long time, especially as the European powers are interested in prolonging its life.

I cannot forbear laughing when I am told that

there are here officers from Prussia, physicians from Austria. These gentlemen may possess great merit and take great pains, but it is like "putting a new patch upon the old garment." Foreign discipline, foreign science, cannot pass organically into the blood, into the germ of life. For regenerating worn out natures inoculation with foreign culture is not sufficiently effective. Other teachers are required for that. To these belong revolutions and total changes of circumstances, presupposing that there is internal vigour enough to support them. As for Turkey I cannot figure to myself any other fate but mouldering away by itself. Ah, no! I envy not the sultan his kiosk on the "Sweet Waters."

By the by, and once for all, my dear Clara, I concern myself as little as possible about Turkish names and Turkish orthography. In the first place, I know not how to spell them, and, in the second, you could not read them if I did. The *h* is pronounced like *ch*, the *o* like *u*; hence numberless transformations for my unlearned ear. For the rest, I fancy, you had rather I should tell you about the kiosk, for you know what that means, than about the *köschk*, for such is the proper name of the thing in Turkish. Well, we were permitted to enter this sanctuary. A magic word opened the door of it to us, and, as I have frequently heard it, I have taken care to remember that word—it is *bakshish*—in plain English, drink-money. As the Turks are beginning to fall under the magic power of this word, I would

lay a wager that, in the next ten or twelve years, bakshish will burst open the gates of Aya Sofia. This is the only device of civilization to which I dare venture to promise a brilliant futurity. By means of a bakshish of fifteen Turkish piastres, or one Prussian dollar, our dragoman procured admission, and we inspected the internal arrangements at our leisure.

Nothing struck me more than the most extraordinary variety and motley diversity of colours: that mass of petty draperies, confusedly thrown over and intertwined with one another, make the eyes twinkle; and the curtains are the principal article of furniture in an apartment. Not only has one side a superabundance of windows, like a hothouse; but windows at either end, the more the better, belong to elegance, and they must of course be provided with curtains. Beneath them runs the sofa, which is very broad, well supplied with cushions, rather higher before than behind, and extremely convenient. Opposite to this, at the back of the room, there is in general a recess, in which is placed a sort of very low chiffoniere, fitted to the form of the recess; it is adorned with a clock, between two bouquets of withered flowers, in slender porcelain vases—and this reminded me of German inns, which twenty years ago had been fitted up in what was considered a style of elegance. On either side of the recess are doors, covered by draperied curtains. Here, for instance, I remarked the following asso-

ciation of colours; one half of a curtain was of rose-coloured merino, with a border of green velvet in zigzag, and edged with white cotton fringe; the other was of white and worked muslin, with light blue fringe. Fine, glossy straw mats covered the floor. The walls, of wood, are completely covered with landscapes, flowers, arabesques, as though to rival the European apartments painted *al fresco*; and the ceiling, likewise of wood, exhibits, in tolerably rude carving, rosettes and shells, upon a pink or light green ground. Sofas and chairs of ordinary wood, covered with yellow Utrecht velvet, stood in some of the rooms, but did not seem to heighten their brilliancy. Such are the arrangements of the sitting rooms.

The bed-chambers exhibit a dreary emptiness—a sofa, nothing more; on this one lies down at night as one lies down in the day. Nowhere in the whole house is there a piece of furniture that reminds you of the usual occupations, or indeed of the most common wants, of life—not a table, not a closet, nothing whatever! Gracious Heaven! how people must be oppressed with ennui in such places! To need few of the inventions of luxury and convenience is a great advantage to persons who are accustomed to live among a superabundance of them, because it shows a buoyant independence of spirit upon external things. But to have no taste for them at home, to want nothing more than the place on which you lie, to eat, drink, sleep, and vegetate upon



it—this advantage one may share at last with any beast. And—indeed, I cannot help it—I find this incessant rolling about on the ground, this everlasting cowering, as it were, on all fours, undignified for human beings, and really something brutal.

One might walk lightly and softly on these fine mats, if the whole house were not built so unsubstantially as to crack and rattle at every step, which causes a sort of earthquake. In this open situation, the numerous windows would produce a most cheerful effect, if they did not admit, along with the sunshine and the green, a prodigious draught between the gaping sashes. In short, there was nothing proper, suitable, kept clean, but the bath, of white marble, with the cupola full of apertures for light—precisely like the Alhambra. On the ground-floor are the apartments of the women, distinguished by nothing but by their being in a still more neglected state, by grated windows, and a close, oppressive atmosphere. No! one ought to stay outside; there all looks well enough—as Constantinople itself is far more beautiful before you set your foot in it.

The interior is rotten through and through. It reminds me of the eastern story about King Solomon. The wise king was dead: he had expired, sitting on his throne; and there he still sat, majestic, motionless, and all obeyed him as when he was alive—all! angels and demons, men and beasts, plants and stones; and he kept them in obedience as he sat there so quietly, with his

chin resting upon his crossed hands, and his hands supported by his staff. At length, the divs began to be struck with his motionless attitude; but, out of reverence, none of them durst approach very near to him. And so they persuaded the wood-worm to gnaw at the staff. For forty days the wood-worm gnawed away, and lo! the staff broke, and the corpse, falling over it, proclaimed that King Solomon had long been dead.

Contemplated on the outside, especially at a distance, and in the evening red of grand, bloody, terrible recollections, the Turkish \* national character has really something imposing, like King Solomon on his throne. But, believe me, my Clara, it is already dead. The wood-worm is already gnawing, but whether he is at the fourth day or the fortieth we cannot tell.

We drove back. There was the Armenian girl still swinging herself; there was the mountebank still playing his tricks; there were the venders of sweetmeats still offering them for sale; and every thing was going forward agreeably to established custom, like child's play, without intelligence, without idea. Not a creature there besides myself thought that King Solomon was dead.

## LETTER IX.

TO MY BROTHER.

The Slave-market—The Basestan—Coffee-houses and Baths.

Constantinople, September 14, 1843.

MY dear Dinand, to-day I mean to do you a most particular pleasure, and to invite you to accompany me to the slave-market—of course the market for *female* slaves, the flower of Georgia and Circassia, and full of black Ethiopian beauties—all to be sold like the finest herd of cattle—a sublime institution; but certainly most agreeable to the eye. Come along then.

We first descend, as one always must, our abominably inconvenient hill of Pera. At the Scala, we are beset by half a hundred rowers shouting all at once; the dragoman bargains for a quarter of an hour, no matter whether with “honest Turks” or with “roguish Greeks,” for our passage across; we seat ourselves very uncomfortably at the bottom of our caïque, and with reason find the space too narrow for two slender persons; but we find the carving that runs round the inner edge very pretty, and the whole boat kept extremely clean; and so we ride across the Golden Horn to the city. There is no end to the climbing, the getting out of the way, the stumbling; there we go, up hill and

down hill, through streets on the right, and streets on the left; there we wind, and turn, and twist, as though we were following the clue of Ariadne; there we work our arduous way through a host of asses, horses, dogs, porters, Turks, Jews, thank God if we get off with only a bump from an ass, for that is the cleanest animal of the whole company, and sometimes prefer walking in the gutter, because that is the cleanest place in the whole street.

We keep walking on and on, for a very long time; for Constantinople is a large city, spread over seven hills. At length, a narrow steep street leads us to a gate, which is the entrance to the slave-market: a keeper, with a cane, stands by it, and the dragoman has to purchase our admission. A Turk rides past and enters before us: the profane eyes of Franks are not deemed worthy to behold the sanctuary. However, the bakshish purifies us, and, during these negotiations, a Jew steps before us, puts his hand to his forehead with a peculiar movement, which signifies, "I lay my head in the dust of your feet;" and offers his services for any contingency whatever—if not for slaves, for shawls; if not for shawls, for tobacco—quite in the officious trading spirit of his people. Franks are not allowed to purchase slaves: that privilege belongs exclusively to the Turk.

Now we enter the paradise of houris, full of curiosity and expectation. The place itself is not

inviting: an irregular square, surrounded by dull galleries. In these galleries are seated the sellers with coffee and tchibouk, overseers, persons who have come to buy, and curious spectators; and, in narrow, low, dark chambers, having a door and a grated window opening into the gallery, is kept the precious commodity. A group is placed—or rather seated, for they squat as usual upon mats—in the middle of the court, on show. Let us look at them!

Oh horror! what a repulsive, what a frightful spectacle! Muster all your powers of imagination, figure to yourself monsters, and you will not come up to the negresses, from whom your offended eye turns with loathing. But the Georgians, the Circassians? the most magnificent women in the world? where are they?—Ah, my dear brother, the white slaves are kept separate at Tophana, thence taken to the harems for inspection, and it is only through most especial favour that you are admitted to their place of abode. Here are only Blacks, and with this unsightly spectacle you must be content. There they sit: a coarse gray garment covers the figure; glass rings of various colours encircle the wrists, and glass beads the neck; they wear the hair cropped close. You are first struck by the forehead deeply depressed over the eyebrows, as in the Cretins; then by the large, rolling, inexpressive eye; then by the nose, which, without share-bone, looks like a shapeless mass; then by

the mouth, with the frightfully bestial formation of the protruding lower jaw, with the gaping black lips—red lips in negroes are a European idea of beauty not verified by the reality ; then by the long-fingered, ape-like hands, with ugly colourless nails ; then by the spindle shanks, with protuberant calves ; but most of all by the inexpressibly brutal air of the whole figure, form and expression included. The colour differs ; sometimes a glossy black, sometimes brownish, sometimes greyish. They exhibit no sign of life, staring at us with the same unconscious look with which they stare at one another.

A purchaser comes and surveys them ; females coming to buy make their observations upon them : they heed neither. They are measured in height and breadth, like a bale of goods ; they are examined, hands, hips, feet, teeth, like a horse, when a customer is disposed to bargain ; they submit to it all, without shyness, without anger, without pain. All this is done with decency, at least, what is called decency, for they are not obliged to strip off their clothes, which reach from the neck to half-way down the thigh. Then a price is asked, an offer made, and the parties bargain : if they agree, the slave goes away with the master or the mistress of the harem ; if not, she squats down again upon the mat, unconcerned about her fate.

Now, how do you like all this ? I must honestly confess that, in the whole proceeding, nothing was so repulsive to me as their ugliness, and that the

majestic royal eagle at Schönbrunn excited in me more pity for his captivity than the slavery of these creatures. I asked myself, "Is it possible that a Sappho, an Aspasia, a Mary Stuart, that these and similar paragons of intelligence, loveliness, and beauty could belong to the same race?" and, with great assurance, I answered myself, "No;" for a woman without intelligence is no longer a woman, but only—indeed, I can find no other word but a *female*. The races! how thoroughly are you convinced of their difference, when you place such a Black beside an Aspasia; and no philanthropist can deny the gulf that separates these two beings. We are of dust, and to dust we return; but, for the few years that I am to live, I thank my Creator that it has pleased him to bestow on my dust a white envelope.

As we are in the city, we will look about us there a little more, especially in the bazar, or, to use the more proper expression, in the Besestan: that is, in the covered market-place. It has much the appearance of a fair, with streets of wooden booths, only these booths have all a substructure of stone, somewhat like a low table, that serves at once for sofa, floor, and counter; and every street is covered with a tolerably lofty vaulted roof, in which holes for air and light are very sparingly distributed. In the middle of the street is the inevitable kennel. You may ride about in the Besestans on horseback or in vehicles drawn by oxen; the throng

of pedestrians, chiefly women, is prodigious. This bustle and din, the closeness of the air, the dimness of the light, the cries of the venders, the vigilance required to avoid being run against by others or running against them, render this place more disagreeable to me than even a fair. Many foreigners, however, pass half days there and amuse themselves with looking about a great deal, and making a few purchases. Now, to me this is an abomination: I look closely at what I mean to buy, and at nothing else. It is unpleasant to me to excite a vain hope in the dealer; but it is equally unpleasant to me that he should speculate upon my unacquaintance with goods and with business to cheat me; and so the least purchase is to me a disagreeable transaction, which I get through as speedily as possible: but here is absolutely nothing enticing, or it is only enticingly displayed.

Each street is devoted to a particular article: in the first, you see nothing but furs; in the second, nothing but shoes; in the third, nothing but cotton-stuffs; in the fourth, nothing but shawls—that is, ordinary ones of cotton or inferior wool; in the fifth, nothing but tobacco-pouches, in the sixth, nothing but pipe-tubes, and so on. In the Egyptian Besestan, there is nothing but drugs, and I remarked there large sacks full of a colouring powder: this is henna, with which the women stain their nails a reddish yellow. In each booth the shopkeeper gravely sits cross-legged upon the



counter covered with a mat or a carpet, smoking, and, if you enter the shop, he rolls himself down from his seat before you, to get the articles you want, reminding me of a man whom we once saw together at Vienna, and who with striking fidelity represented an ape.

The shoe-shops look very showy, owing to the diversity of colours, and chiefly on account of the velvet slippers embroidered with gold and pearls, which are to be had at all prices, from two florins to one hundred. But a European foot cannot wear them, because the point turns up, and the sole is of wood.\* The articles inlaid with mother of pearl, boxes, plates, tables, are also handsome—a Turkish table is about a foot high, and of the size of a plate, and nothing is laid upon it but a pipe-head or a coffee-cup at most; so the whole thing, legs and top, is inlaid with small pieces of mother of pearl, partly white, partly stained with various colours, of the size of a *pfenning*,\* which form simple designs. The forms are inexpressibly rude; nothing but the elegant material renders these clumsy, quadrangular, jewel-boxes endurable. That element which we estimate more highly than luxury—elegance—is totally unknown to the Turk. Rich and splendid he may be, tasteful he rarely is, elegant never. Luxury is, in regard to the enjoyment of life, the flower of the civilized world; elegance is its perfume. A rude nation, a rude

\* A German coin worth about half an English farthing.

man cannot be elegant ; that really depends a little upon qualities of mind.

The arms, too, are interesting to see, and some of them very costly : there are Damascus swords at 30,000 piastres, that is 2000 Prussian dollars.\* But the Turks have ceased to wear arms ; they have no daggers or pistols in the belt, imparting such a majestic air to the oriental dress in pictures and descriptions. They are said to be civilized too, and as, in the civilized world, there is a police, besides other such-like measures of precaution to watch over the public safety, the individual is relieved from this trouble, and arms are become useless, nay, dangerous, in his hand ; among the common people you perceive no trace of them. High personages wear a sword buckled to a leathern belt, in the ordinary European fashion, when they appear abroad. They always ride, and mostly on fine horses ; the common man alone goes on foot. A slave walks by the stirrup ; another follows, carrying a long machine, covered with a cloth, which I took to be a gun, for I thought the man was going a-shooting. A Turk shoot ! a Turk take pleasure in strong exercise and rapid motion ! Oh no ! only Franks are fools enough to call that amusement. The Turk's enjoyment, his pleasure, his diversion, is repose. The machine that is carried after him is the magic wand which transports him into the paradise of that delightful repose, is

\* £300 sterling. T.

—the pipe. You see circles of ten or twelve men together, observing profound silence, perfectly satisfied by the beloved pipe. Most of them smoke the tchibouk, the long tube, the Turkish pipe; some the Persian, the nargileh, a snake-like bag, which opens into a large glass jar full of water. In the numerous coffee-houses you have opportunities for observing such a silent company, which produces upon me precisely the impression of a collection of wax figures.

I can very easily conceive how these men may become passionate opium-eaters : this silent brooding over nothing, this motionless absorption in nothing, this densely beclouded existence, lighted up by not one flash of thought, not one star of intelligence, becomes at last so unsatisfactory, that the soul sinks into a state of morbid lassitude, out of which it cannot raise itself by any mental effort, by any fresh energy. These wings, with which we strive to lift ourselves above the dust, that which, with us, it is, or *ought to be*, the end and aim of all education and of all culture to develop, are lamed with them. The thirst of the soul may be every where the same, but whether it strives to slake that thirst with pure water, or with such as is muddy and turbid, that makes the difference. To reach the pure springs we must climb heights ; the turbid waters lie nearer at hand, and spare trouble. There then is inhaled an intoxication, which fetters the mind and unfetters the senses, and, by the captivity

of the one portion of the human essence, procures for the other a delicious liberty, at the expense of the first. Whoever knows so little of the mind as the Turk, has so little activity, such a dislike to occupation, knows nothing of passion, but its brutal side, never feels a longing, but only a desire; whoever has ceased, at the same time, to be engaged in a struggle for the preservation of life, like the savage nations, but is acquainted with all the indulgences of voluptuous effeminacy—precisely like the Turk—must addict himself to opium. Sultan Mahmoud shut up the coffee-houses of the *theriaki*, (opium-eaters); but it is not to be expected that the propensity would be eradicated by that measure. They are only not now to be seen in their intoxication, which, for the rest, is said to be externally very decent, quiet, and silent, and by no means so brutally rude as European inebriety.

All the coffee-houses are arranged nearly upon the same plan. A quadrangular, whitewashed room, with as many windows as possible; along the room, wooden sofas covered with mats, or carpets; on the farther side, the fire-place and places for cookery; in the middle of the floor, a small fountain; low stools, even European chairs, at the door: the whole clean but mean; if at all pretty, standing under a spreading vine, the branches of which form an ante-room, or under a fine shady tree; such are the coffee-houses in Constantinople, which never suggest the idea that they have the slightest resem-

blance to those of Paris or Milan. The low stools are chiefly occupied by Armenians and Greeks; the chairs being destined particularly for Franks. Sometimes, when all the other places are filled, a Turk endeavours to establish himself upon one of them; and then it is really laughable to see how one leg hangs mournfully down, while the other finds scarcely sufficient room to lie doubled up on the seat.

Occasionally, you do find a man using his tongue in a coffee-house: this is a story-teller. He speaks, in general, with a nasal twang, and, as I did not understand him, I was really much surprised to see the whole grave assembly smile, nay, even laugh. The more obscene these stories the better they are liked; and above all, they must have women for their subject—so my dragoman told me. I heard from another quarter that, if the Turks ever enter into conversation, it is always about women, and in that style. In the amusements of a nation, how much is there that is characteristic!

I wished to see some dancing, but was told it was impossible; and, when I imagined that this meant nothing more than that I could not be admitted into places where people dance, I innocently proposed to have the dancers home to my quarters, as I once had at Seville; that was declared to be still more impossible.

The Turks have the reputation of great purity of manners: I will not detract from it, but only ob-

serve that, on this point, one must not set out from the European notion, which calls it immoral to have children out of wedlock, or without wedlock. But the Turk, who may purchase any slave that pleases him, and take her to his harem, deems the children of twenty slaves just as legitimate as those by his wife; and I really think that, if the fashion of harems were introduced into Europe, there too the immorality of natural children would be done away with; only, indeed, at the expense of this still greater immorality of the harem itself. I cannot believe that on this point the Turk has any advantage over the European. The women, especially, are said, in spite of veils, grated windows, and eunuchs, to have the art to get into love-intrigues enough—especially when they go to the Besestan. On this account there exists a law, that they shall not enter any shop, but stand outside to be served with what they want. There is also another, commanding tradesmen to have only the ugliest shopmen that are to be found. All this, methinks, attests no very extraordinary purity of manners.

To compensate for the indecent dancers and story-tellers, there is certainly a favourite recreation of the whole nation, and of both sexes, which is very decent, but, at the same time, rather stupid—I mean the baths. There they delight to spend their days, bathing, breakfasting, reposing; bathing again, dining, and again reposing. I was at a women's bath kept by the nurse of sultan Abdoul

Medjid. The first thing you must renounce there is all claim to convenience, to say nothing of luxury. In the first room, the everlasting wooden sofas run round the walls, and you must bring carpet and cushions along with you, if you do not choose to lie on the hard boards. In this room there is the natural temperature. Then follow smaller ones, heated more and more by steam, overarched by the Moorish cupola, full of star-like apertures for the admission of light, otherwise without window, without furniture, with marble floor. Such a closet you may take by yourself, in company, just as you please, and you leave the mistress to attend to her business. The principal point is that you should perspire prodigiously. The Turkish women have an incredible variety of cosmetics, ointments, essences, colours, Heaven knows what all—things which I detest: these are applied before you leave the bath. My horror was not slight when the bath-woman besmeared my face with a marvellous balsam, composed of earth from Mecca, and myrtle leaves steeped in rose-water. I made a violent opposition, but she assured me that it was indispensably necessary to the toilet, and that I should soon see how it would improve my complexion. Upon my face, accustomed to no other cosmetic than simple cold water, it produced no effect whatever; but the bath agreed extremely well with me, in spite of its tropical heat.

I had gone to the bath chiefly with a view to see,

if possible, handsome women. But they were *tout comme chez nous*, neither handsome nor plain, something between both, the young ones, that is to say; the older, hideous. Age comes on here early. They marry at thirteen, fourteen, even at twelve years old: at twenty they are thought too old for matrimony. The face exhibits the signs of age later than the figure; at some thirty years, that is frightfully flabby, spongy, and bloated. The everlasting sedentary way of life, the everlasting hot baths, the everlasting indulgence in sweetmeats and confectionary, deprive the form of all nerve. They look like masses of flesh, not solid enough to keep upright, but sinking down with their own weight. But you cannot form a conception how ardently one wishes to meet women in the streets, instead of those clumsy brown bears, with white heads. The women, with us, are, God knows, not particularly beautiful; but, such as they are, they look infinitely better than these muffled-up figures, and give a more cheerful aspect to the streets—this you find out before you have walked about here many days.

In Pera, indeed, you see plenty of Frank and Greek women; the former dressed in the French fashion, the latter in their own costume, that is in a short gown, of a peculiar cut about the bosom and arms, and a remarkably graceful head-dress, composed of a silk handkerchief and their braided tresses: but the stranger prefers to go about more in the city and in the Turkish suburbs.



What struck me more perhaps than the scarcity of female faces is that of young men. All Turks look old. By them a white beard is deemed handsome: in consequence, they take as great pains to turn it white as people in Europe do to make their hair black: they use, in particular, a powder mixed with tobacco, which produces this effect. Hair they have none; it is shaved off. The fez is pressed down upon the eyebrows; the gray beard surrounds the red fleshy face; the figure is broad and heavy; no where a trace of youthful beauty and vigour. In more advanced age, they look better. It is, indeed, extraordinary to be old and handsome; but it is more pleasing to be young and handsome. And, when I lately met a young gipsy of marvellous beauty, in fantastic costume, with a guitar under his arm, I could not help stopping, looking after him, and thinking:—The civilized man must have intelligence, the barbarian, beauty, or they are both unendurable. Is it not so, my dear Dinand?

---

## LETTER X.

TO COUNTESS SCHÖNBURG-WECHSELBURG.

Dancing and Singing Dervises—The Cemetery of Scutari.

Constantinople, September 16th. 1843.

MY beloved Emy, here I really am at last, at the gate of the East, the region of the sun, about which we have so often conversed, of which we have so

often dreamt! I am not in it yet; the Bosphorus is only the threshold of it; but the gates of the West are closed behind me, for that which forms the foundation-stone, the marrow, of the life of nations, and infuses a soul into the multitude—religion—is different here.

I am in the territory and under the sway of Islamism. I came hither without prepossession for or against it : I pity not the Mohamedan on account of his faith, neither do I admire him. It is *his* law which *his* Prophet brought to him ; this seems to me no ground either for admiration or for abhorrence. The Koran frequently reminds me of the Old Testament ; only I find in the latter an element that harmonizes more with me, namely, an inexpressible melancholy, a sadness, that longs for distant, far distant, consolation ; a struggling for the consummation which keeps further and further aloof. As this agrees so exactly with me, it is likely that it may be the cause of my strong partiality for the Old Testament. More tranquil, peaceful, but also more weary souls repose in the New ; this I can comprehend, and I too find it in relation to doctrines, more sublime, more perfect ; but it is only in the Epistles of St. Paul that I again find that indescribable melancholy which represents man in his never-ending struggle between the billows of Time and the rock of Eternity, by which his nature is at once attracted and repelled, as by two magnetic poles. The feelings of others on this subject may be very different. On

account of its universal applicability, I regard the Christian religion as the most perfect, because it anticipates the wants of mankind; only it must be left in its sublime freedom, and no attempt made to confine it permanently within the limits of any particular church. The Church is, like every institution, an organic body, which is subject to the vicissitudes of such a body, and has its youth and its old age; how then can it in sincerity be deemed immortal, unchangeable? And, if we cannot deem it so, ought we to wonder if it drops to pieces? Those must, I think, have been happier days, when people felt a childlike conviction of its immutability; but they never lasted long. Schisms and heresies have always existed, and the most astonishing thing is, that every new one claimed for itself the monopoly of that imperishability, which it peremptorily denied to the others. In this respect also, I find the Old Testament so grand, and its prophets so penetrated with the spirit of truth, that they do not consider themselves as the last word in the book of the Revelations, but always point to a futurity full of sublime enjoyments. And, after so many thousand years—ah, my Emy! which of us does not long for that? Not so the Mohamedan. This is the essential difference of Islamism. To it nothing is of value that is not *itself*. “There is no God but God, and Mohamed is his Prophet.” This confession, simple as a sum in arithmetic, is the foundation-stone and the key-stone of his faith, and is hewn, I might say,

in the table of his law, like the wedge-shaped characters. This it was that, in the days of its youth and its vigour, rendered it overpowering as fire ; but that has gradually burnt out within it to ashes—so it seems to me.

The forms in which the devotion of the Mohame-dans is expressed have nothing particularly striking for the eye of a foreigner. Their numerous prayers and alms, and their pilgrimage to Mecca, find strong analogies in the Catholic church ; their dancing Dervises may bear to be compared with the Shakers and Tremblers in America—and in England too, if I mistake not ; and I cannot help thinking that the *Convulsionnaires* of the last century in the Calvinist Cevennes, nay this many phenomena at the American camp-meetings of this day, must have resemblance to the singing Dervises.

There are seventy-two orders of Dervises ; they comprehend not only monks and ecclesiastics, but form fraternities, only—agreeable to the rule. Dshelaleddin Rumi, the famous Persian poet, was the founder of the Mevlevi Dervises. Among the ancient Persians, as among the Indians, where Krishna himself led the dance, the solemn brawl, a round dance, intended to symbolize the movement of the planets about the sun, belonged to religious worship.

The Mevlevi dance out of devotion, and I figure to myself that that poor Bayadere, who, a few years since, whirling and spinning round a palm-tree, so

heartily tired the European public, must have innocently profaned some such temple dance at our theatres. I never saw her. The Mevlevi dances from much the same impulse that we fall upon our knees—from adoration. A short time since, one of them entered a Christian church here, during divine service; the priest was standing at the altar, about to administer the sacrament. The Mevlevi advanced close to the altar, and examined it and the church and the persons present so minutely as somewhat to disturb the congregation. They would fain have turned him out, but the Christians are obliged to treat Mohamedans with much more respect than *vice versa*; and so he was allowed to stay. At length, the crucifix caught his eye; his face gradually assumed a more serious, a more devout look, till at length he bowed, extended his arms, circling for a considerable time about the altar in a solemn round dance, then bowed once more before the crucifix, and slowly and devoutly left the church.

The dancing devotions of the Mevlevi take place publicly, twice a week, in their mosque. Everybody is admitted; only the Frank must observe the Turkish custom, and take off his shoes, or put on slippers over them. For the Turkish women a distinct grated gallery has been provided. I at first went thither, for I am downright curious about the Turkish women. On such occasions, I have a kind companion in Mademoiselle Balbiani, who

understands the language of the country, and is acquainted with all its manners and customs. Females by themselves, I mean Frankish, are in reality safer than when escorted by a man, because, according to the Turkish notion, it is indecorous for persons of different sexes to appear in public together. The height of indecency is when the man gives his arm to the woman. Belonging, as he does, to a rude people, the Turk cannot comprehend that a man can pay attentions to a female, that he can feel desirous to make the way easy to her; all his own attention to her consists in allowing her to glide past him, like an incorporeal shadow, uninjured. To give the arm he regards as a sign of fondness, and punishes this reputed immodesty by pelting with stones, and many a poor foreigner has been insulted for merely wearing a green veil. I wear a blue one, and take good care not to accept a friendly arm; for though it is a matter of perfect indifference to me, whether the people behind me shout or not, yet I have a particular aversion to being pelted with stones, because they give pain; and, in spite of all precautions, you can scarcely escape them. "Stones here! let us stone the dogs," cried the children at the house-doors lately, in one of the sequestered streets of Scutari; and the dragoman was obliged to threaten them severely, to keep them quiet. In the suburb of Cassim Pacha, where the labourers in the harbour live, the children followed us with insulting cries: and, near a mosque,

a little spiteful girl shewed her malice by throwing sand at me, because she had nothing else, but for which an old Turk seriously reproved her. The only feeling which this excites in me is a hearty wish that these young imps had a taste of the rod, and the conviction that I am quite unfit for a martyr. An involuntary wish that I had it in my power to defend myself will also arise. On the other hand, however, the women whom we pass in our walks through the cemetery frequently exclaim, "Ah! how happy are the Frank women that they are allowed to go out a-walking with the men!" No doubt, they must be heartily tired of being for ever confined to the society of their own sex.

At the Mevlevi mosque they were prodigiously inquisitive, but in the most superficial way. Where do you come from? From Frankistan. This perfectly satisfies them. Under that name they comprehend all Europe, from Malta to Spitzbergen. Not a single question about that foreign, distant, unknown, land. Questions about dress, about children—inexpressibly stupid. They tired me; neither were they handsome, and, as I could not see well through the grating, we went down stairs.

The interior of the mosque is octangular, and a low balustrade cuts off from the space in the centre a passage that runs round it in a circular form. This passage is covered with mats, and occupied by devout persons and spectators. The space in the

middle is reserved for the Mevlevi. They enter, one after another, clad in long brown cloaks, wearing on their heads a felt cap, exactly resembling in form and colour a reversed flower-pot: the sheikh (the superior) alone had a green turban. On entering, they bowed to the *mihrab*, the niche in every mosque marking the direction of Mecca; consequently, here at Constantinople, in the south-east. The niche is empty; two wax-tapers, in high candlesticks, generally stand by it: this is the sacred place, as that of the altar is with us. The sheikh seated himself upon a cushion: the nineteen dervises sat down on the floor, in a semicircle around him, and all of them, in an under-tone, and with the usual motions, said their prayers, commencing with the incessantly repeated form, "There is no God but God," &c. Unseen singers, accompanied by a drum and fife, also played by unseen performers, sang a hymn in praise of the Prophet, which sounded monotonous and somewhat nasal—like the psalmodies in the Catholic service, or like the singing of the preacher before the altar, in the Lutheran. The sheikh then repeated in an under-tone, a long, very long, prayer; and when the drum and fife began again, they all rose, and went three times round the mosque, devoutly bowing to the *mihrab*. The sheikh thereupon returned to his place, but the dervises, dropping their cloaks, commenced, in long white garments, with abundance of folds, having one hand upon the breast and the other extended, to whirl round them-



selves and round the open space, nearly as in a very slow waltz. Gradually extending the other arm, they turned round in such exact time and step, that the heavy garment of each expanded about his body like a bell, without exposing more than the feet. Some inclined the head to one shoulder, others held it erect : all had their eyes closed, or at least steadily fixed upon the floor. Not one touched his neighbours, even with his fingers' ends ; not a garment brushed against another ; the utmost order and tranquillity governed every movement. The moment the sheikh gave a signal, they all stood still, with a firmness plainly showing that the movement, which would make any ordinary person dizzy, had no effect upon them. I had been warned not to laugh, but, indeed, I was not disposed to do so ; for the whole gave me the impression that I was attending a serious ceremony.

At the Rufaji dervises, it was totally different ; there I felt so nervous that I almost wept ; one does so, you know, sometimes, when disagreeably affected, and this sight was certainly most repulsive. Their convent is on the Asiatic side, at Scutari, and the interior of the mosque looks more like a square empty barn than like a temple of God ; dark, and filthy. The ceremony consists in repeating, for hours together, the first words of the confession of faith, "Lah illah, ill allah," in a certain time and with certain rocking movements of the whole body, forward, backward, and sideward. They begin

slowly, and increase gradually to a breathless rapidity, so that the words sound like an inarticulate groaning, and the movement becomes an irregular spasmodic convulsion. Their faces glow, the eyes are ready to start out of the head, the mouth gasps for air.

One of them threw himself with clenched fists upon the floor, and struck his forehead against it with violence, as if he was in convulsions; but this was a farce: his comrades quieted him, and presently he resumed his place. Very few of these people were dervises. Any one who feels a call to submit to this punishment is admitted into the circle. I call it punishment, for very great bodily exertion is required for this exercise, so that it can scarcely fail to produce severe pain in the back. Little boys, from the innate propensity to do what they see grown persons do, clambered over the barriers, and twirled and shouted with all their might. The sheikh stood in the middle, and beat time with his hand, like the director of an orchestra, to excite to increased rapidity. When nothing but a wild hoarse moaning proceeded from the breathless bosom, he gave a sign, and all stood silent and motionless. Four men, seated on a carpet, in the middle of the circle, at the feet of the sheikh, then began to sing, one after another, in a half nasal, half guttural tone, hymns of praise and thanksgiving, which, though anything but harmonious, yet formed a peaceful interlude. Meanwhile, some who had tired themselves

sufficiently went away, and others came in. A little boy, who could not be more than ten years old, pushed at the same time through the spectators, thrust us aside, and that nothing might be omitted, fiercely cried, "Out of the way, Giaour!" It was a saddening exhibition. From the wall in the background were suspended various instruments of torture, daggers, nails, &c., with which the most ferocious fanatics formerly mangled themselves, or merely practised sham-fighting.

This sight reminded me of the Flagellants, who formerly exercised their cruel austerities in Germany and France. It is remarkable how much uncultivated human nature is every where, under all circumstances and relations, alike, having a faint foreboding of the joys attached to a lofty flight of the soul, to a determined subjugation of grovelling and petty desires, and likewise a faint impulsion to self-sacrifice and self-denial; and yet it cannot raise itself above the lower sphere of corporeal mortifications. Such phenomena usually occur in times of decay, or of persecution of religious ideas: for fanaticism starts up as the antagonist of indifference, and, in the persecuted, conviction is heightened into enthusiasm. As the latter does not take place in Islamism, it may perhaps, be the former. But I assure you that this society of demoniacs produces a horrible impression.

Quite confused and tired out, we quitted the mosque, and went, in order to recruit ourselves, to

the great, immensely extensive cemetery of Scutari, which the Turks choose in preference for their burial-place, because it is situated in Anatoli, in Asiatic Turkey, and they have a sort of presentiment that Rumeli, Turkey in Europe, will not much longer be theirs—so I am told. Perhaps, however, it is only a predilection for their Asiatic home, for the land from which they sprang, that urges them to direct their bones to be laid in its soil.

This cemetery is less profaned than those in Constantinople itself; it lies out of the city, of course there are not so many trades and occupations carried on in it; neither is it considered as a market-place or a dunghill. It serves for a promenade after the Turkish fashion, that is to say, people seat themselves under a tree, the men to smoke, the women to eat or to do nothing; and, indeed, the spot is very inviting for repose beneath these noble cypresses. But this is not enough for us Europeans; we stroll about, we penetrate into the interior of the grove, we seek beautiful prospects. In so doing, we pass innumerable graves that have fallen in, and tomb-stones broken to pieces; and are convinced that, were it not for those extraordinary trees, this cemetery must produce a most melancholy impression—for the vaunted respect of the Turks for their tombs consists only in allowing them to decay slowly, very slowly, by the lapse of years. To preserve, is what nobody thinks of. Something is constructed—a house, a mosque, a tomb, a street—

and then left to its fate ; looked after and repaired, never. A want of foresight, an engrossment by the present, such as savages alone can display, forces itself upon your notice. No rayah, no Frank, no Jew, dares plant a cypress beside his grave ; that is the privilege of the Turk. The former lie, in general, beneath turpentine-trees, but which have not the majestic, mournful, form of the cypress. The Jews' cemetery is a bare, naked hill, dotted with white, irregular stones, which have a truly hopeless and comfortless appearance.

In our stroll through the vast cypress groves, we came at last to an open spot commanding exquisitely beautiful views over the Sea of Marmora. We proceeded farther and farther, and at last to the kiosk of the sultan, behind the great barracks of Scutari, upon the elevated shore of the sea—that was a sight capable of refreshing the soul, and effacing the recollection of coarse and repulsive scenes, by others of the most pleasing character. To the right of us lay the Bosphorus, like one of those glistening snakes of the fairy-tales, when snakes were not venomous, but lucky messengers of fairies and good spirits. Where the snake winds into the Sea of Marmora it wears upon its head a glittering crown, the summit of the Serai, that agglomeration of gardens, towers, pavilions, terraces, above which rise the cupolas of the mosques and the minarets, forming a residence in which a prince of spirits must be supposed to dwell, so ideally

beautiful is it, as a picture, and viewed from this spot. The city itself, the harbour, the suburbs, to which villages adjoin—all lie to the right also, projecting above the bright mirror of the Bosphorus. To the left extends the hilly, little cultivated, country of Anatoli, with single pines and trees of the cedar species on the near and distant hills, which gradually subside, and, at the point of Chalcedon, form the low and tolerably verdant shore of the Propontis. This is spread out before us, covered with the most delicate enamel, and in its silver frame are set the nine Princes' Islands, like larger and smaller amethysts, tinged of a roseate and purple hue. Several are naked rocks: on others there are villages, gardens, and on one a Greek convent. Above them and beyond the Propontis, the eye follows the hilly coast of Anatoli, which rises higher and higher toward the horizon, and at length lies like a stool at the foot of the Bithynian Olympus, which, crowned with snow, like a sage of ancient days, grave as one of those who can tell of the very different times of gods and heroes, looks down upon the present world. A brisk south wind blows; the whole Propontis is studded with sailing vessels, which are coming from Anatoli and from the islands laden with fruit and vegetables, and must lose no time to avail themselves of this favourable breeze to sail into the Bosphorus, which is frequently closed against them for a month together, when the north wind blows, its current, moreover,

which is very strong, running from north to south. Like swans, like sea-gulls, the most distant like small white butterflies, they glide over the silvery expanse, and behind them are formed winding azure ribands, like nets, upon the sea.

Ah, how still is this! how it refreshes! how clean it bathes the soul from all the dross of human doings!—dross in devotion, dross over tombs, dross about what is most sacred—to this, O my God, man is doomed! for every form is dross, when the spirit does not penetrate it to the very tips of the hair, and one is every where meeting with some point which has been rebellious to it, and from which it has withdrawn. This turning, this whirling, this singing, in honour of God, be the one ever so solemnly, the other ever so obstreperously, performed, is at bottom not adapted to the expression of a communion between the creature and the Creator. On the shore of the sea, opposite to the mountain, under the bright dome of heaven, I can think undisturbed of my God; for there around me all is light, unalloyed with that foul, black dross; there his revelation is undistorted by the hand, unadulterated by the weak intelligence, of man.

Oh, this longing after light! it draws me into the far East; it leads me over seas and mountains; it urges me on to that land where have ever been exhibited marvels and marvellous deeds, encompassing a ray of light, as the fruit once incloses the stone, and is produced from it. I shall never find

what I am seeking, never find the immediate relation between the faint spark of light *within* me, and the vast sea of light *out of* me! only in symbols, in forms, in images—only mediately will it reveal itself more or less to me! Such is the lot of man. But I have sought it with an ardent—O no! with an enthusiastic longing. That is the aim of my life! and to see a little moon, or a star, or a constellation, rise within me, is a felicity—a sun—that would be supreme happiness! but who accomplishes so much as that? My dearest soul, God grant it to you! You are worthy of it. I love you on the Bosphorus as on the Baltic—that you know.

---

## LETTER XI.

### TO MY MOTHER.

The Mosques — Aya Sofia — Suleimanye — Achmedye — Osmau-ye—Fountains.

Constantinople, September 17th. 1843.

My dearly beloved mother, this is your birthday. I think of nothing but you, for the rain is falling in torrents, the wind blows furiously, making the ill-secured windows rattle, and violently shaking the slender tops of the cypresses, usually motionless, while rivulets are running down in all directions from our hill of Pera. Yesterday I was well nigh carried away by them. We were returning from a long expedition, and on our way home, but before



we were out of the city, we were overtaken by an absolute deluge, from which, in this country, you have no carriage, no sedan-chair, to take shelter in. Every caique was transformed into a small floating bath; besides, those light craft are very unsafe in sudden squalls; so I preferred walking to sitting in water, and we made the long circuit over the great bridge to Pera. To climb the hill was a task for a rope-dancer, because the streets, as I lately wrote to you, have the kennel in the middle, and not a spot but what is sloping. This kennel was now a permanent cascade, and in that I walked, for my shoes were soaked through, smooth and slippery as an eel-skin, so that I could not keep my footing on the broken pavement. I was thoroughly convinced by this experience that it is impossible to leave the house here in rain, and, as I am certain that it will not cease to-day, I am a prisoner, and therefore have time to give you a circumstantial account of my yesterday's peregrination.

At length to the mosques! and this time not with the turbulent Wallachian gentlemen, but with an equally numerous company composed of all nations, who took an interest in the thing, and to whom we had an introduction from the author of the *Ahn-frau*.\* He is a kind, plain, unassuming man, in whom there is nothing that betrays the writer of his awful tragedy. He had the goodness to call upon me; and, as his company had solicited and received

\* The celebrated German tragic writer, Grillparzer.—TRANS.

the necessary firman, I had no hesitation in joining it. The party was a mixture of Germans, English, French, a Dutchman, a Spaniard, thrown together from all the countries of Europe, to survey the wonders of the religious architecture of Islamism.

I was myself very, very deeply interested. I had meanwhile seen, by a lucky accident, the mosque of Beglerbeg, afterwards that of the Mevlevi Dervises, and the deserted mosque of Piale Pasha: so much the more desirous was I to visit Aya Sofia, and the celebrated mosques of sultan Suleiman and sultan Achmed, which last two had not been christian churches, as the first was. Ah! that, that is a wonderfully imposing edifice, in the interior, only for externally I think it disfigured by the half-cupolas placed around the great cupola which give the building a heavy, compressed appearance. A grand chiaro-scuro, a solemn magnificence, pervade the interior, and indelibly stamp its christian origin. The dogma of the Triune God is impressed in a manner not to be mistaken on these recesses, and imparts to them the mystic colouring of our ancient cathedrals, to which, however, Aya Sofia of course has not, and cannot have, any resemblance; for, compared with it, they are mere youngsters. She is their ancestress. Hence, just as the most ancient and the most illustrious families have no patent of nobility to produce, because they date back from a period of which no documents exist—so Aya Sofia is not built in any particular style; but it furnished

the model for that afterwards called the Byzantine, the principal feature of which is the circular arch springing from pillars. Byzantine, indeed, it is pre-eminently to be called; it was the most superb flower of Christian Byzantium, and was founded by Constantine after his conversion to Christianity.

But, more than a century later, when Justinian was Roman emperor, he resolved to erect a temple to the "Divine Wisdom," which should surpass in magnificence and majesty the world-renowned structure of King Solomon; and the unfinished edifice of Constantine was taken for the groundwork of Aya<sup>a</sup> Sofia. As the story goes concerning Solomon's temple that neither axe nor hammer was heard while it was building, because the work was to be performed in solemn stillness, as if in constant prayer, so there was no lack of legends respecting this. An angel is related to have enjoined Justinian to set about the undertaking, to have furnished him with treasures to carry it on, and lastly, to have prescribed its name. The work was really performed with all the devoutness of which that age was susceptible. It was commenced with prayers and processions, and, at every tenth stone, a relic was inserted in the wall. The noble columns, of porphyry, marble, and verd-antique still attest its ancient splendour, though it has undergone many changes and injuries in the lapse of time, particularly from earthquakes.

Thus did it stand a thousand years and witness

the decline and overthrow of the empire of Byzantium. It beheld women and eunuchs governing the emperors, who enjoyed themselves, contented with the purple of the throne. It beheld secret murder and open revolt creep through the imperial families, and the son exercise atrocious cruelties against the father, the guardian against the nephew. It beheld the people following with mad enthusiasm, the games of the Circus, and drawn by them into ferocious insurrection. It beheld the educated, the learned, absorbed in subtle disquisitions concerning the nature of the Godhead and the Trinity, and wasting on metaphysical sophistries the proper faculties for acquiring knowledge and for acting. It beheld a degenerate, faint-hearted, arrogant race, wavering between voluptuousness, erudition, and tyranny, in the individual and in the whole nation. It beheld the Latin empire of the Crusaders founded in Byzantium by the Venetians and their doge Dandolo; and beheld it overthrown. Lastly, it beheld that comet, portentous of calamity, the Ottoman, flourishing his fiery scourge from Anatoli, nearer and nearer to Byzantium, till, on the 29th of May, 1453, it beheld sultan Mohamed II. on horseback approach its high altar, before which he repeated in voice of thunder his profession of faith, "There is no God but God, and Mohamed is his prophet." And with that it was transformed into the first temple of this strange faith. Profanation saved it from destruction; apostacy protracted its existence.

We were allowed to go through it from top to bottom. Over the aisles run wide galleries, formed by the most costly pillars, from which you may conveniently overlook the whole nave, and perceive many particularities. Thus you see the ancient mosaic work, with which the vaulting was coated, peeping in many places through the whitewash with which it is now encrusted, probably because it represented sacred subjects, which are abhorred by the Mohamedans. You see also many erased crosses on the marble parapet, and a few that have been forgotten and left. But, above all, you have an unobstructed view of the whole interior, which presents a regular quadrangle, in the centre of a large cupola, and overarched by four half cupolas round about it. The walls are lined with marble, which, from length of time, has acquired a dark softened colouring, that must have been an admirable foil to the ancient mosaic. Now, the whitewash forms a harsh and mean contrast.

I have heard Aya Sofia compared with St. Mark's church at Venice, but all the resemblance which I can discover is this : that on both rest the splendour and the shade of a thousand years ; that both remind you of the grandeur and the fall of mighty empires, of the overthrow of what is most stable ; and that in both the soul is fain to lift itself up to the ancient, the eternal God, whom men seek to honour by church and mosque. But St. Mark's is infinitely more beautiful—wholly wrapped, like a sybil, in mystic reverie, while Aya Sofia has had to

endure horrible distortion. The mihrab, namely, the holy spot to which the Mohamedan turns when he prays, must always be placed in the direction towards Mecca, must be in the Mecca line, or the kiblah, as it is called. Now, in Christian churches, the high altar is always at the east end, and the kiblah here points to the south-east; hence the whole internal arrangement presents a degree of obliquity. The mats which cover the floor are all laid obliquely; the people, when praying, all kneel in a diagonal line: so awkward did it look, that I could not help wishing I had the power to replace everything on its former footing. The mihrab, I may observe, is an empty niche, nothing more. Near it, on the right, is a sort of high pulpit, with steps leading up to it; this is the place for the person who gives out the prayers, and on the left there is a kind of scaffold, supported by pillars, from which, on Friday, a religious discourse is delivered, and that too in the Turkish fashion, by a person sitting cross-legged. There is not a mosque but has a sort of grated box; this is destined for the sultan. The whole internal arrangement is confined to this, and such is that in Aya Sofia.

We saw it at the hour of prayer, because that is the most interesting, and this time quite unmolested. We were allowed to stand, to walk, to look about; the bakshish, I fancy, must have been distributed among the right persons. Women and men were not separate; they said their prayers together, in-

deed all together, in an under-tone, which produced a prodigious buzzing murmur. In the aisles, the people sat quietly together; one of them was writing in the Turkish fashion, that is to say, on a piece of paper laid on the palm of the left hand; for in this inconvenient way the curling Turkish letters are made from right to left. The reed-pen and small inkstand are carried at the belt. Some turned the rosary; but this, I am told, is rather an occupation for the fingers than an exercise of devotion, and is not considered as such. One read prayers, at the same time making incessantly short rapid bows, so that he looked just like those nodding Chinese figures on our mantel-pieces, which are my supreme aversion. An idiot dervise had collected around him a large circle, who surveyed him in silence. He was a young man in a singular dress, a short fire-red tunic, and a prodigious turban decorated with flowers; in his hand he held a pilgrim's staff, to which a large bouquet of flowers was fastened. He strolled about the whole mosque, and gazed vacantly at objects, after the manner of these poor creatures, who are regarded as holy by the Mo-hamedans, and who, protected by this notion, are safe from the insults and ill-usage of the populace.

The other mosques were quieter: indeed, they are very different from that of Aya Sofia, the offspring of a different idea. In that, the Christian dogma, impregnated and interwoven with the grand, fervent mysticism of the most ancient times, and with the

glow which warmed the faith of the Fathers of the Church, is still plainly recognizable. On these, the clear, simple law of Islamism, "There is no God but God, and Mohamed is his prophet," is as indelibly impressed. This law is perfectly intelligible, and susceptible of no other meaning than that which it is intended to express. If you take, on the other hand, any one dogma of the Christian Church, the Trinity, the incarnation of Christ, his ascent to heaven, or his descent to hell; or if you read in the Gospel of St. John, "In the beginning was the word; and the word was with God; and the word was God," to say nothing of the Revelations; in all this there is in fact nothing to understand, but infinitely much to interpret. Hence it is that men, from Arius to the present day, consequently for fifteen hundred years, have disputed immeasurably about the signification of such passages and treated each other as enemies. Some insist on taking them literally, others figuratively; a third party is for adhering only to the spirit, which animates words and images; and others again propose something else. The consequence is a great deal of agitation, wavering, and schism; but on the ocean rage furious tempests which never arise on the stagnant lake; and so to this striving to understand, to these strenuous efforts to arrive at the true interpretation, the world owes much that is beautiful, namely, the whole ecclesiastical architecture of the middle ages, that mind-imbued elaboration of so prodigious a mass



of stone as is a church, under the protection of the cross, which it rears on its summit.

Of course, then, a church makes—it must make, it is designed to make—a totally different impression from a mosque; and, in my estimation, Aya Sofia has been but temporarily converted into the latter. There is a little legend current among both Christians and Mohamedans, which expresses the belief that Islamism will not always prevail here. At the moment when Constantinople was taken by the Turks, a pious priest was reading mass in Aya Sofia. The dreadful tidings reached the church just when the transformation of the host was taking place. The priest prayed with intense fervour to God to protect the sacred body of Christ from desecration; and, behold! a wall suddenly enclosed priest and host, and both will issue from it unharmed on the day when Constantinople shall be retaken by Christians. But, my beloved mamma, you must not ask if I have seen this wall; you must believe as I do, that it is the entire Aya Sofia itself.

Sultan Suleiman the Great, gave orders, in 1560, to his great architect Sinan, to build the celebrated mosque which bears his name—the Suleimanye. It is likewise quadrangular, likewise covered by a cupola, has likewise superb antique pillars, and windows of painted glass, composing elegant arabesques, and it is a complete mosque; the spirit that impregnates it, is simple to dryness, and plain to emptiness, yet without being mean. No: mean it

is not by any means, solid, extensive, and complete as it is! but its spirit does not give enough, for it does not reach high enough. But, finished though it be, heaven will not slip into it—at most a bit of the Mohamedan paradise, represented by garlands of wire, to which are hung small lamps, ostrich eggs, gold tassels, a kind of rude chandeliers, which are lit upon festival nights, and which are to be seen in every mosque. That of Beglerbeg was quite immeshed with them. But this childish decoration is totally inconsistent with the simplicity of the rest. The walls are whitewashed; the mihrab is lined with Dutch tiles; the floor is of brick, but covered with mats. If it could be imagined that an ascetic people had its place of worship here, this poverty would be less displeasing; to me it appears only a sign of imperfect development. However, the form of the whole, the arrangement of pillars supporting the cupola, the columns introduced between the pillars, remind you of Aya Sofia by a certain air of solemnity.

But the mosque of sultan Achmed, celebrated throughout the whole extent of Islamism for its six minarets, the Achmedye, really carries simplicity to the length of poverty. An immense quadrangle, in the centre of which four prodigious, extremely clumsy pillars support the cupola, windows in all the walls from top to bottom, the whole fairly coated with whitewash—such is the Achmedye!

The Osmanyeh, built during the last century

pleases me better; it is certainly smaller, but then the whole interior is unobstructed, and the light, entering at the numerous windows round about, suits this well. The walls are lined with white marble up to the frieze, and this is formed by gold letters a foot long, composing texts of the Koran on a black ground, and looking, from their curling flourishes, like arabesques. The simple clearness of the law of Islamism, I find most happily conceived in the Osmanyé, and represented in the best sense; and on account of this consistency, it has made the most agreeable impression upon me.

The accessories of the Achmedyé are grandest: its six minarets, with two and three tier of galleries, and its very extensive fore-court, with noble plane-trees; its spacious inner court, surrounded by a portico of antique marble columns; the elegantly wrought marble fountain, covered with texts of the Koran in its centre, render it a jewel in the great casket of Constantinople.

For the rest, all the mosques have more or less spacious and handsome fore-courts, with porticoes supported by pillars, with plane-trees, and cypresses, and with a fountain. These accessories are as necessary as the charitable institutions attached to them. In the shade of the trees, near the fountain, are usually seated venders of rosaries. In the fore-court of Sultan Bayesid's mosque pigeons are fed: such is the custom, that whoever gives a trifle may have the pleasure of seeing flocks of pigeons

fall foul of the corn scattered about for them. The Turk is good-natured : he wishes the brute animals to fare well, and highly disapproves the killing one of them, when there is no need for it. To this misapplied good-nature is owing the nuisance of the dogs in Constantinople. Sensible people have proposed that they should be poisoned. But, Heaven forbid ! what an outcry the Turks raised against such cruelty !

I love the dog for his faithfulness, for his anxiety to understand, for his veiled though undeniable intelligence ; but those of this city give me no other impression than that of vermin, and fall under the category of rats and mice, which we are forced to destroy. When, at night, these thousands of hungry throats begin to howl, and the watchmen in the harbour, to keep themselves awake, add from time to time their long monotonous, dismal cry, you feel a shudder thrill you, as it does at home with us in ice-cold winter nights ; and for this the dogs are chiefly to blame. Or you take a ride : the horse treads on one of these brutes, which never moves out of the way ; he sets up a howl, his companions join it ; they assemble from all quarters : they run behind you, their number increases at the corner of every street ; the howl turns to a bark ; the horse becomes uneasy, the rider stunned. Or they die, and as carcasses are a still greater nuisance. But the Turk cares not for all this : he is too good-natured not to be fond of vermin. Does this ap-

pear to you to be a virtue? Let him possess it for me: but his indolence is really intolerable.

Yesterday the whole company was under the protection and guidance of a kawass. This is a sort of guard of safety or honour, and is assigned by the government as a perpetual escort to all foreign ministers and consuls; likewise to individual foreigners, when it is the intention that a firman should be respected. It was twelve o'clock: we had been walking precisely two hours. All at once we were told that the kawass was so tired that he could not go any farther, that he must rest himself over a cup of coffee and a pipe from his past fatigues, and recruit himself for those which were to come. And so it really was; for, at a coffee-house the whole company was obliged to halt and wait for half an hour.

It was near the entrance-gate of the Serai, but to see that is now quite impossible, because the Grand Signor is about removing from the palace of Beglerbeg to the Serai, with the intention of passing the approaching Ramadan—the fasting season—perhaps the whole winter, there. Sultan Mahmoud disliked this, the proper residence of the Grand Signors, which, shut in by walls, towers, and gates, encompassed by courts, gardens, and a whole world of buildings, is situated at the very extremity of the city, in the shape of a triangle, washed on two sides by the harbour and the Propontis, and in the pic-

ture of the Bosphorus forms the most conspicuous object of the whole, by the name of Seraglio Point. No other palace or kiosk has such an admirable situation; but to none are attached so many horrible recollections, of which those of the murdered sultan Selim were probably the most horrible for sultan Mahmoud. Whether these are less liable to obtrude themselves upon his son, or whether the latter, as is customary with sovereigns, likes to do precisely the contrary to what his predecessor did; be this as it may, the Serai is to be again inhabited, and the preparations making for the purpose close it against strangers. So I was told by the ministers of whom I made inquiry, and particularly by the internuncio, who is so extremely kind to me that, to a certainty, he would obtain me admission, were it possible. I must, therefore, be content with having seen the Sublime Porte, where the business of the State is transacted, and must give up the Serai, where the Grand Signor revels in Oriental magnificence. Into his very kitchen I might else have penetrated by means of bakshish and good words—I am told; but that would be no amusement to me, and I am quite unworthy of the felicity of peeping into the grand signorial pots and kettles.

Good God! I am getting out of the mosques into the kitchens! that is the fault of the lazy kawass, who has detained us near the Seraglio, before the entrance of which is, however, to be seen an extremely

beautiful fountain. This and all its sisters are great ornaments to the city, though they are wrongly denominated fountains, by which we understand streams of water perpetually rising to a certain height from wide basins, and falling into them again. These are reservoirs of water enclosed in handsome temple-like buildings, out of which the water is economically conducted by pipes into troughs for cattle, having tin saucers chained close to the pipes, by means of which thirsty men may refresh themselves in their way.

This water-temple in front of the Serai is square, but has rounded corners, and a far-projecting fantastic roof, so that it has somewhat of a Chinese air, Arabesques of various colours, stucco, gilding, texts of the Koran, cover it from top to bottom, giving it a motley but pretty appearance, and the whole is so clean that you might set it on the table as you would a tea-chest or a work-box.

I have done with the mosques, too, for no more than four, the Aya Sofia, the Suleimanye, the Achmedye, and the Osmanyé admitted us within their precincts, and these are quite sufficient to convey a precise idea of their architecture, their arrangement, and the impression which they make upon the spectator. What the reader may say on the subject, my dear mother, might be very different. But so much the more do these suffice, only in another sense. The greater number would not contribute to render the matter more intelligible to you.

I kiss your hand a thousand times. Next year on this day I will do so in reality, Inshallah ! as the Turk says, that is, if it please God.

---

## LETTER XII.

TO MY SISTER.

Buyúkderé—Tower of Leander—Tower of Galata—The Seraskier's Tower—Bulgurlu.

Constantinople, September 19th. 1843.

MANY things here, with which others are delighted, I cannot help finding intolerable, and at the head of these must be placed the trips in caiques which I am obliged to make almost every day, and which become more and more annoying to me. When I was once praising the gondolas of Venice, the person to whom I was speaking replied that they were not to be compared to the caiques of the Bosphorus, those were merely commodious, these absolutely delightful. To me this is incomprehensible. The gondola glides without oscillation, without shock, gently and smoothly as a swan, through the lagoons, guided by the gondolier, who, standing with astonishing adroitness on the extreme edge of the stern, plies his oars with strokes soft as if given with the little finger, while the passenger sits upon a very broad, low, well-stuffed sofa, covered or open, just as he pleases. In the caique you are rocked, and feel, moreover, the shock of every pull of the oars, because the



rower throws himself back with vehemence, so that you always perceive a two-fold motion ; at the same time you are lamentably seated on the bottom of the boat, and must perforce submit to be broiled by the sun and sprinkled by the waves. I should think that there can be no doubt which is the more convenient of the two. At any rate, I shall adhere to my opinion: I know but of one sort of craft for really delightful water excursions, and that is the Venetian gondola.

Whoever would wish to enjoy the caique in its completest discomfort, needs but to take a trip in it to Buyúkderé—and that no traveller omits doing—he will then experience the delights of the caique for three long, long hours. Buyúkderé is the well known and celebrated village on the Bosphorus, in which most of the foreign ministers have their summer residences: just now they are all away, excepting the internuncio—he is here, thank God ! Ah, you in Europe, you cannot imagine how agreeable it is to find upon the hill of Pera such a European house, in a style of perfect elegance ! But, setting that aside, I could not gain access to all I wish but for the internuncio. He has just informed me that I have permission to visit, next Friday, the harem of Rifát Pasha, the minister for foreign affairs. I am in constant communication with him, though it is scarcely possible to keep that up while he is at Buyúkderé, especially during the last days, when torrents of rain and tempestuous winds

have prevailed. Some fifty caiques—at first it was said two thousand—have been dashed in pieces in the Bosphorus; six larger vessels have foundered, many houses along the shore are damaged, because the ships' bowsprits broke through them, and the bodies of more than thirty persons who have perished are already picked up. The equinoctial tempests have set in unusually early.

We had a fine day for our trip to Buykúderé, but were plentifully splashed, for, in doubling the little promontory, the current is always so strong, that men running along the shore are obliged to tow the caique. We had three pair of oars, and yet the passage took three hours; the return is performed in less time, because then you go *with* the current.

Buyúkderé is situated to the north of Constantinople, on the deepest bay formed by the Bosphorus; and hills, meadows, and ravines full of plane-trees and evergreen oaks are grouped on the acclivities behind the place, but not high enough to command a view of the water. Very near it, and on the same bay, lies the village of Therapia, where the French minister has his summer residence and a large garden full of magnificent trees. To a person living at this place, the wholesome fresh air, the beautiful prospects of the coast of Anatoli, with the ruins of the Genoese castle overgrown with ivy, and with the gigantic mountain—moreover the numerous walks, which one has not in Constantinople, afford, no

doubt, great pleasure; but I am more pleased with the scenery of the shore during the passage. It has more variety, more warmth: the Bosphorus is narrow and winding, like a river: at Buyúkderé, it is like a lake, and the country monotonous.

The return, by the same route that we followed on our arrival in the steamer, is surprisingly interesting, for the scenery on either side becomes more and more beautiful, so that you ought to have a hundred eyes to contemplate at once the diversified richness of the whole and the charms of each individual point. The village of Candili, on the Asiatic side, is delightfully situated on the slope of the hill. The old Ottoman forts, Anatoli Hissar and Rumili Hissar, lie most picturesquely opposite to one another, like two combatants broken by age. By their erection the sultans alarmed and harassed the Byzantine emperors, who in vain protested against it. Very near them now lies an unfinished Russian fortification, pointing to the future as they do to the past. All the black houses of the village of Jeniköi show that they belong to Armenians, who like to conceal their wealth under this exterior. The numberless Turkish country-houses, on the contrary, are of every variety of colour, like flowers, and of the gaudiest hues. To me they look like card-houses, frail and transparent, set up as ornaments to the Bosphorus, but uninhabitable by men. When children, we had little pasteboard houses, in which we kept grasshoppers—do you recollect? They make a good ap-

pearance, however, especially as a contrast, when you come from Buyúkderé, and from the solemn ivy-covered ruins; it is like passing from autumn into spring.

The Grand Signor, who is said to have some fifty palaces, great and small, in and about Constantinople, has of course several kiosks upon the Bosphorus, and the large palaces of Beglerbeg on the Asiatic, and Tchiragan on the European side. The latter, erected by sultan Mahmoud, is said to have cost thirty-seven million guilders [£3,700,000 sterling]; and this may have been the case, since the architect contrived to build at the same time no fewer than twelve houses for himself out of the pickings. Ladies of the sultan's family have also their palaces on the Bosphorus—the men not. A sultan has no male relations; either they disappear in their infancy, or, when they grow up, they are kept as invisible as the brother of the Grand Signor Abdoul Medjid.

Scutari, with its dark back-ground, the celebrated cypress grove of the cemetery, is a grand ornament to the Bosphorus, for, like a great city, which it really is, with its more than 100,000 inhabitants, it completes the trio of Pera, with its different appurtenances of other suburbs, and of the city of Constantinople properly so called; so that each of these three divisions forms a considerable city, while together they compose the present Stamboul.

Upon a rock in the Bosphorus, nearest to Scutari,

is situated a building with a fine name but a melancholy destination, the Tower of Leander, the lazaretto for persons infected with the plague. What the name of Leander signifies here nobody can tell. According to an old tradition, it was called the Maiden's Tower, because a princess was confined in this tower by her father to save her from a predicted calamity. Now this princess had a lover, who, to gain access to her, disguised himself as a gardener, and carried her a basket of roses. Rejoiced both by the gift and the giver, she hastily took the basket, when, behold! a venomous serpent darted from the roses, and stung the maiden in the bosom. The lover instantly killed the viper, and sucking the empoisoned blood from the wound saved the life of the princess. With the further incidents of the story I am not acquainted, but I hope the old king was convinced that against love there is no protection, and that whoever overcomes its dangers will be able to surmount any others. And now this tower is a plague lazaretto!

Fortunately, this terrible disease has not appeared for some years at Constantinople, and it has also been exempted from destructive conflagrations. But, in 1831 raged at once plague, cholera, and a conflagration which consumed 40,000 houses, and among them the hotels of most of the embassies. The English has lain ever since a ruin amidst a neglected garden; but it is in contemplation to build a new one. The French is building; the Russian just finished,

but not furnished—a real palace of hewn stones, each of which is said to have cost a ducat. The view is one of the finest in all Constantinople ; and if the fitting-up of the interior is as magnificent as the situation and the building, the emperor of Russia, on his next visit to Constantinople, will have a truly imperial *pied à terre*. The internuncio occupies the Venetian palace : not a splendid edifice, but sedate and stately, just as Austria itself is always and every where in its external demeanour ; and as I like inexpressibly to see both in States and individuals, without any trace of ostentation. It pleases me doubly, on account of the exceeding kindness of its inhabitants.

But the prospect from the terraces and from the great colonnade of the Russian palace may vie with the most celebrated in Constantinople—with those from the Tower of Galata and from the Seraskier's Tower, which we ascended in the first days after our arrival. The former stands on the declivity of the hill of Pera, almost close to the wall which surrounds Galata, and the gates of which are shut at night. For Galata, a town founded by the Genoese to promote the interests of commerce, acquired such importance under the feeble Byzantine emperors, that it soon became a petty state, having its own court of judicature, its own church, and likewise a fortress, with embattled walls, towers, and gates. As the emperors were not capable of preventing the independence of the Genoese, they were obliged to put

up with their arrogance in their own residence; and it was not till the fall of Byzantium itself that Galata was ruined.

It forms to this day the commercial division of Constantinople, where the merchants and bankers have their warehouses, magazines, and offices, sometimes in houses, in which may plainly be perceived the half demolished or decayed tower. The walls are standing, but most of the towers are ruins, and the whole wall is completely overgrown with ivy and other creeping plants. But this is only a bit of the great panorama spread out around the Tower of Galata, and it lies at its foot. The eye follows the whole bend of the Golden Horn, which forms, perhaps, the finest harbour in the world. There all possible vessels, caiques, sailing barks, steamers of all nations, merchantmen, frigates, ships of the line, are lying conveniently together, as upon the sea; and yet a connecting bridge is thrown from Galata to the city, which, though but of wood and already out of repair is no ornament, but a great convenience. We counted seven Turkish frigates, all dismantled, and in the most deplorable condition. Some ships of the line appeared to be equipped. On small natural or artificial rocks are scattered throughout the whole harbour sentry-boxes, in which soldiers do duty for the sake of order and security; and they themselves enjoy the most perfect and undisturbed repose, for there they sit knitting stockings—a favourite occupation of the Turkish soldiers. More

pleasing objects in the harbour than these good fellows are the sea-gulls, which, in millions, have their abode there, and, white as snow, perch on the masts and yards, or rock themselves on the waves.

Beyond the harbour the city spreads itself out in its whole length, from the point of the Serai to the land-wall, and beyond this the suburb of the potters, to the mosque of Eyub, with its plane-trees and cypresses. This mosque is a peculiarly sacred edifice, erected in honour of Eyub, who was Mohamed's standard-bearer. Here takes place the important ceremony of girding the Grand Signor with the sword, which nearly corresponds with the coronation of a king; and never has foot of infidel profaned its sacred floor. Burial places inclosed by railed arcades, overshadowed by cypresses, here and there adorned by rose-bushes, which lend to the cold tomb-stones a breath of their lovely life, lead to the mosque; in these celebrated, learned, and holy men are interred. At the gate of the outer court sat a watchman, who at first would scarcely allow us to peep in, to admire the largest, the most umbrageous, of all the many majestic plane-trees that we had yet seen about Constantinople. But our dragoman so tamed and softened the Cerberus by mild words, and without any bakshish, that he grew quite civil, and at last conducted us among the tombs, naming the most eminent of the dead interred there: for instance, Ebn Sund, a famous lawyer in sultan Suleiman's time. So profound, so undisturbed a peace



reigns beneath the cool green shades of Eyub, the whispering and the rustling of the lofty tops and the mighty branches of all the noble trees shed round such a repose, that the Moslem intolerance which dwells beneath appears like insanity—for all intolerance is a false notion founded on the folly of self-conceit, which makes the faith of him who harbours it the centre of the universe. In the world, where so many follies are at home and find abundant nourishment, religious intolerance is not to be wondered at; but, among graves, whose secret none has fathomed and none revealed, it ought to be silent. It was terrible to me that the Turk should be for driving me away, as though I were a noxious animal, though I have indeed as much devotion for what is really worthy of devotion as anybody can have. This one is obliged to put up with here; but it is hard for me.

I have been led away from my panorama by a digression, my dear Clara. I only meant to say that the city spreads itself out in its full extent before the Tower of Galata, beginning with the brilliantly beautiful Seraglio Point, and terminating with the solemnly beautiful mosque of Eyub. Beyond the city you perceive the sea of Marmora, but only like a narrow stripe, bordered by the mountain chain of Bithynia; its Olympus, crowned for some days past with snow, ascends like a light cloud at the horizon. The other parts of the panorama consist of the view of the Bosphorus, and of the bold hills which com-

mence just beyond that of Pera, and are said to run undulating through the country, and gradually rising into the Balkan. One of these hills bears the dreary disconsolate cemetery of the Israelites, which I lately mentioned. Another is called Okmeidan (arrow-place), where sultan Mahmoud practised archery, after the Turkish fashion, without target, merely shooting to as great a distance as possible to exercise the strength of his arm. Wherever an arrow fell, a stone is erected as a memorial of the feat; here an obelisk, there a Corinthian pillar, yonder a Byzantine, this of snow-white marble, that gilt and painted. A small kiosk, in which the sultan rested himself after this exertion, begins already to decay, and in a few years will be as much, but not so handsome, a ruin as the mosque of Piale Pasha, at the foot of the Okmeidan, in a grove of elms and plane-trees, already is.

The prospect from the Seraskier's Tower completes that from Galata, as it chiefly presents a bird's-eye view of the city itself, and then a most magnificent view of the Sea of Marmora, with the Princes' Islands and the Asiatic coast. The seraskeriat corresponds with the ministry of war of the European states, so that the seraskier is something like minister of war, and one of the most important personages of the Sublime Porte. On an extraordinarily spacious and open place stand the buildings of the seraskeriat, of which the Tower alone strikes the eye, and that only because it is a tower, not because it is handsome.

You ascend, accompanied by a police-officer, find at the top a coffee-room, and enjoy the view most conveniently through twelve large bow-windows. We sat there a long, long while, sometimes at one window, sometimes at another. Whenever and wherever you see the Propontis, it is always rendered by a magic play of colours beauteous as an everlasting *Fata Morgana*; and a bird's-eye view makes you much better acquainted with the physiognomy of a city. We were struck by the great number of buildings with cupolas, which are not perceived in going through the streets. These are partly khans, partly imarets: these are kitchens for the poor, in such number, that it seemed to me as if half Constantinople must be fed at them; the former, buildings in which merchants from foreign countries find at once lodging and a warehouse for their goods. Thus there is a Persian khan, in which are the magazines of the finest shawls; and there are some Armenian ones also.

A khan is always built of stone, inclosing an inner quadrangular court, and two or three stories high. An iron door closes it at night, so that the inmates and their goods are very safe and tolerably well protected from fire. This institution is highly needful in a country where there are no inns—that is to say, not for Turks, only for Franks. A lodging in the khan consists of an entirely empty room. There the traveller spreads the carpet which he has brought with him, and then has all the accommodation that

he needs. Upon his carpet he sleeps, he sits, he eats, he writes, he smokes : a carpet suffices for his whole household establishment. Good God ! what spoilt creatures are we Europeans !

As I am on the subject of beautiful prospects, I must not forget that from the hill of Bulgurlu, though it did not particularly please me because, according to my taste, it lies too far inland. At Scutari we mounted a talika, and were at least an hour and a half in reaching the Bulgurlu, the highest point of which, crowned by two trees belonging to the cedar species, we were obliged to ascend on foot. As I observed, you see all that imparts beauty to Constantinople ; but you see it at too great a distance. On the side of the Bulgurlu stands the kiosk in which sultan Mahmoud died suddenly and lonely—of poison it was said at the time of his death ; here I am told, of drinking wine to excess. I should think both untrue. Never yet did any mighty potentate, to whom are attached many hopes and many fears die at a critical moment, but partisans as well as adversaries contrived to find out some very extraordinary cause of his unexpected decease.

A gleam of sunshine, the first for these three days, entices me out. So, till to-morrow, my Clara.

## LETTER XIII.

TO MY SISTER.

Hebdomon Palace—Ancient Byzantine Remains—The Atmeidan—Extermination of the Janissaries—The Seven Towers—The City Walls.

Constantinople, September 21st. 1843.

THE gleam of sunshine which enticed me out the day before yesterday, my dear Clara, showed me a remarkable illustration of the perishable nature and transformation of all earthly things; it showed me the ancient Hebdomon palace of the Byzantine emperors, inhabited by a beggarly crew of Jews; the utmost magnificence plunged into the deepest filth. The ruins of the imperial palaces in Rome are not less decayed, and on their sites grow cabbages and weeds; but the remains are grander; in a more open, sequestered situation, they may be more like the wilderness—this is like a common sewer. Through the quarter of the Blacherne, which has retained that name ever since the Byzantine era, when a palace and a gate upon this spot led to it, you proceed to the Hebdomon palace.

This quarter is chiefly inhabited by Jews, and those of the very lowest class; and the most beggarly of all have established themselves on the top of the hill, about the walls, and even in them. A couple of miserable houses are so built that you must pass through their disgusting rooms to look

through one of the ancient windows, on the outside of which a column is still standing; and you must wind your way through all sorts of wretched garments and utensils, in order to climb a ruinous terrace, from which there is a view of the open country. Bakshish of course: but a score of women and half-naked children, who had assembled outside, assailed us with such cries for money, at the same time seizing me, poor creature, who never carry a para about me, and holding me fast by the arm, the veil, and the shawl, that the dragoman had great difficulty to clear the way. Rats harbouring in the worm-eaten remains of a long since mouldered throne! such was my impression.

Upon the whole, everything that belonged to ancient Byzantium—the Aya Sofia excepted—is destitute of the grand character of the monuments of Rome, and for this reason, at least so I account for it, because Byzantium itself was only a sort of imitation of Rome, and without real originality. Moreover, the Byzantines, an effeminate race as they were, must have built on a much smaller scale and with meaner materials than the proud-spirited Romans; for, though Byzantium was taken by the Mohamedans full a thousand years later than Rome by the German nations; and though we may reckon the barbarously desolating civil and foreign wars to have been quite as destructive for Rome as Islamism and earthquakes for Byzantium: still

there exists here not a single monument which affords the slightest glimpse of that grandeur which so undeniably pervades the Coliseum, for instance. There you have a whole city of antique monuments ; temples and palaces, bridges and baths, circus and amphitheatre, pillars and porticoes, tombs and triumphal arches ; you can join them together, build them up in imagination, and in some measure comprehend them. Here, though Constantinople has not been quite four hundred years in the hands of the Turks ; here, you have nothing, my dear Clara, but a heap of rubbish, with a few elegant apertures for windows—the Hebdomon ; amidst a confused mass of little Turkish houses, a tall porphyry shaft, the signification of which is unknown, and which is called the “ Burnt Pillar ;” a very fine cistern, with lofty colonnades, in which silk is now spun ; and in the Atmeidan, (the race-course) an Egyptian obelisk, a column, and a monument of brass, representing three entwined, headless bodies of serpents.

This Atmeidan is the Hippodrome of ancient Byzantium, where were held the chariot-races, in which the people took as outrageous delight as did the Romans in the fights of the gladiators in the Circus. At Rome too there was of course a Hippodrome ; it is now called, if I mistake not, the Circus of Caracalla, and from its ruins one might collect the complete arrangement of such a structure. Here, it is impossible : a spacious, uneven

place is bounded on one long side by the fore-court of the Achmedye, and on the three others irregularly by houses; in its centre, at one end of the long square, stand those three monuments, which are probably remains of the works of art, with which it was customary to decorate the Hippodrome. For, among the ancient Greeks, the Olympian games were held in honour of the gods; consequently, the places where they were celebrated were embellished with the most exquisite productions of art. The Byzantines borrowed them from their neighbours, the ancient Greeks, but of course without the religious signification; and, retaining only the splendour, not the taste, this diversion became the most insane, the most extravagant, the most distorted that ever people had. With the chariot-races of the Hippodrome were connected sanguinary feuds, insurrection, revolution, political and religious dissensions. On account of a charioteer, the city of Thessalonica rebelled against the emperor Theodosius I., who punished it with a prodigious massacre. The prudent emperor Justinian, and his artful and ambitious consort Theodora, attached themselves, he to the orthodox, she to the heterodox party, that they might exercise influence, and have authority over both the parties of the race-course; for the Blues were orthodox, the Greens heterodox. This did not prevent the two parties from falling out at a race, in such a manner



that a terrible conflagration, which destroyed half Byzantium, was a consequence of their quarrel.

The Atmeidan is, therefore, as important a place in its way for ancient Byzantium as the Forum for ancient Rome: in both was displayed the character of the people—hence the impression which both make, apart from locality and surrounding objects, is most diverse: in the Forum spoke and acted men, with the frequently harsh, frequently cruel, always profound gravity of the Roman; in the Atmeidan, the erudite, sophisticated, enervated Byzantines, whose real character it is as difficult to determine as the colour of the chameleon, diverted themselves even to bloodshed.

On this account I do not like them, not even individuals; so that there are but two or three females in the history of the Byzantine emperors, for whom I feel an interest—the “wise Pulcheria,” sister of Theodosius the younger, his guardian during his minority, empress after his death, a different sort of “virgin” sovereign from queen Elizabeth of England; for, though married late in life, as empress, she adhered faithfully to her maiden condition; and had not only a pure and pious soul, but a mind highly cultivated, and imbued with every sort of learning. Secondly, her sister-in-law, Eudoxia, wife of Theodosius the younger, who was a prodigy of beauty, virtue, and intellect, who constituted the delight of her husband, and was reputed to be the

pearl of all empresses. But an apple, which Theodosius had presented to her, and which was found in the hand of the learned Paulinus, subjected her, in her fortieth year, to the suspicion of incontinence, and she was repudiated justly or unjustly, went into exile, and shut herself up in a convent at Jerusalem. Against calumny, and against one's own frailty—for neither of the two is proved—no perfection is a defence. Irene, the great empress, the friend of Charlemagne and Haroun al Raschid, who proudly declined the hand of the former, and, hurled from the throne, was destined to expire in solitary monastic exile, on one of the Princes' Islands, within sight of her palace and her crown, separated by the Propontis only from Byzantium—Irene has one of those characters that *make* their own fate, and therefore my interest is excited for her. It is claimed in a very different way by Anna Comnena, who has related the conquest of Byzantium by the Crusaders, in the time of her father, Alexius Comnenus; for an imperial princess recording the events of her father's reign is a phenomenon that does not occur again, as far as I know, in the whole range of history; and so Anna Comnena is unique in her "History," as Johannes von Müller\* says of Cæsar; but not with quite so much justice.

\* The celebrated German historian of Switzerland. It is a curious fact that the first volume of a work destined to gain him such high renown, bore the false imprint of Boston, in the United States.—TRAN.

As I have made one digression from the Atmeidan to the females of the ancient imperial Byzantium, I will make another into a very recent period. In the Atmeidan (meat place) were situated the barracks of the Janissaries, and on this spot they drew up, with their kettles—a sign of discontent—and demanded, in the days of their insolence, the head of this grand-vizir or of that pasha, or sums of money, or any thing else to which they took a fancy. It was brought, flung into a kettle, and they went away contented. If not, mutiny, change of sultan, or some other act of frightful insubordination, ensued. To put an end to these excesses was for sixteen years the predominant idea of sultan Mahmoud's mind, which he could not execute till 1826, because he was obliged to go to work with the greatest caution. On occasion of the reforms which he partly made in the army, and partly designed to make, their opposition always broke out afresh; and he durst not take any direct measures against it, because their adherents among the populace, and indeed all classes, were too numerous. He contrived to give such a colouring to these reforms, as though they had been the real state of things in former times, and as though it was his intention not to introduce anything new, but to restore what was old. In this manner he gradually gained a firm footing and a sure hand; and a fetwa, which he procured in this spirit from the mufti, condemning all who opposed his reforms as transgressors of the

true law, was put in execution at the next disturbance raised by the still turbulent and refractory Janissaries. When they were assembled on their Etmeidan—to the number of thirty thousand, I have been told—sultan Mahmoud called together the Diwan, laid before it the fetwa approving his design, ordered his new troops to be collected, and to march with cannon to the Etmeidan. A furious battle, a prodigious slaughter, ensued. The Janissaries retreated before the cannon into their barracks; these were set on fire; the sword massacred here, the fire consumed there: in three days there was not a Janissary left in Constantinople, and, for a fortnight afterwards, the caiques in the Bosphorus were every moment running against a human head.

The excitement which pervaded the public mind in those days is said to have been most intense. All knew that something was in agitation, but none knew what, how much, how far. The Franks were always told, "You may be quite easy; it is not aimed at you"—but they too were in the most painful alarm; for, if the Janissaries had proved victorious, the Franks would have fared badly.

It is incredible what outrages the latter had to endure from the former. A very short time before their destruction, so I was told by a person of unquestionable veracity, a Janissary met an Armenian merchant, and called to him "Come hither! I have bought a new yataghan, and I want to try on thy neck whether it is sharp." In such a case resist-

ance was useless. The merchant submissively approached, and resorted to remonstrances and entreaties. After a long colloquy, under the bare, glistening weapon, the merchant at length said, "I am in thy power, do with me what thou wilt; my orphan children I recommend to thy generosity." On this, the Janissary suffered him to depart. Perhaps the whole was merely a joke; but the moral torture of being exposed to the brutality of such a joke was really too great. For the rest, if the Janissary had chosen to be in earnest, the head of the merchant would have fallen, the murderer would have put up his yataghan, and there would have been an end to the affair.

At that time, indeed, the Christian, whether rayah or Frank, was estimated no higher than a dog, and was under constant apprehension of insult. Madame Balbiani lived seven years at Pera, without ever venturing to cross to Constantinople, so unsafe was it then. But those days are past; if you but use a little caution, avoid wearing green, as I lately mentioned, and the like, you meet with none but childish affronts.

Apropos of green! I was told that every one who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca is now-a-days authorized to wear a turban of that colour. But I now hear that a man is appointed expressly to watch that no one wears a green turban, excepting the descendants of the Prophet; because this family still holds a distinguished position among the Mo-

hamedans. Among the Turks there are neither noble nor what we call illustrious families. All are nothing. The Grand Signor is everything ! and he alone acquires distinction on whom he confers his favour, be he eunuch, boatman, barber, pipe-bearer, renegade, or slave. Such is the origin of most of the high functionaries, ministers, pashas. They please the Grand Signor by intelligence, cleverness, or other qualities that he values ; or they display extraordinary talents ; or they insinuate themselves by artifice into his good graces : in this manner they raise themselves out of dust and become somebody, sometimes persons of high importance, while they are in favour with the Grand Signor. In Turkey then, there is no other superiority of rank but one, depending on personal merit : hence I cannot help thinking that it would be a splendid country for the European Liberals, since they betray the same disposition to flatter the sultan in his palace, as the people in the streets, in order to attract notice.

Enough, at present, my dear Clara, about the Atmeidan as well as the Etmeidan, which both hold so conspicuous a place in the history of Christian and Mohamedan Constantinople, and have both been so steeped in blood. Among the other remains of the Byzantine era, of which chiefly I intended to-day to give you an account must be reckoned the aqueduct, which lifts its beautiful arches above and between the houses, and is at this moment under repair. We walked upon it as upon a lofty terrace. The aqueducts are works which the Turks

take some little pains to keep in order, because they set a high value on good fresh water and a copious supply of it; on this account, the sultans have at all times preserved the ancient aqueducts or built new ones. We intend in a few days to take a ride to Belgrade, where all the works of this kind, from the emperor Justinian to sultan Mahmoud, are comprehended within the compass of a few miles.

Individual fragments of ancient columns and pilasters are found rather frequently, in general in the most wretched houses, used here for door-posts, there for threshold. In a wall, in the Blacherne quarter, we found stones with some Greek letters; and a few days since, as we were returning home over the bridge, at the end of it before the gate of Galata, there had just been dug up a torso, a fragment of a marble statue from the waist to the knees, in a garment full of folds, such as the ancients were accustomed to give to their orators. In any other place, relics of this kind would be collected and preserved; here nobody cares about them. There they are left lying, till some poor man comes by and carries them off, to be applied to some purpose or other about his humble dwelling. More of them have no doubt perished from neglect than from actual destruction.

The architectural works of ancient times which have most interested me, because they are at once in the best preservation and most picturesque, are the city walls. This sounds paradoxical, it is never-

theless absolutely true. Yesterday, it was a most lovely morning, we took a caique and rowed over the Golden Horn to the Seraglio Point, then round into the Bosphorus, which soon opens into the Propontis, and lastly on this finest of all seas, still continuing to skirt the city to the famous Seven Towers, the ancient state-prison of the sublime Porte. Here once stood a palace of the Byzantine emperors ; upon a stone over the gate still figures the Roman eagle. How much would he have to tell us ! well for him that he cannot ! Whoever had been an eye-witness of all the horrors that have been perpetrated here, had been greatly to be pitied. To read of them only requires strong nerves : for example, the narrative of the circumstances attending the murder of the emperor Andronicus, and of sultan Othman II. both of whom were confined here. On the spot, all these came forth from memory bodily before my eyes. Besides such recollections the Seven Towers have now nothing terrible ; they are merely a citadel at one corner of the triangle formed by Constantinople, and the interior of which is not allowed to be seen.

Here we left the caique, and took a walk of an hour and a half along the land-walls, which extend from the Seven Towers again to the Golden Horn, nearly in their ancient form. They are three-fold : the first wall is without towers and appears to have been the lowest, because it has almost fallen to ruin and been carried away, so that you may conveniently see



the ditch on the other side, which is quite full of kitchen-gardens and fig-trees, and the two other walls; these are provided with bastions at regular distances, and so placed that the outer bastion covers the inner wall, and the inner bastion that part of the outer wall which stands before it. The bastions are mostly round, some quadrangular, one is an octagon; of course all of them are ruins—that renders them beautiful, for ivy, the wild vine, and still more delicate creepers, now closely clasp the cloven and fractured stones with their strong, slender arms, so that it really seems in many places as if nothing else held them together: and I could not help thinking of the heroine of the Persian poem, the fair Rhodaver, who drew her beloved Rustan up to the window by her hair; such is the impression of strength and tenderness produced by the sight. But it is not creeping plants only that have taken possession of the ground; there are also noble plane-trees, which, conjointly with the ruins, form groups so grand that you are often ready to imagine you have before you the remains of some vast ancient palace, not city walls.

The gates are comparatively small, narrow, and low; several were removed, others walled up, in times long gone by. The gate of St. Romanus, now called Top Kapu, Cannongate, fixes the eye, for here, on the 29th of May 1453, fell Constantine Paleologus, the last emperor of Byzantium and the seventh of his dynasty. Constantinople had

been besieged ever since the 6th of April, and sultan Mahmoud II, achieving apparent impossibilities to accomplish his purpose, caused ships to be transported overland, and a gigantic cannon cast, while the people of the city were engaged in a furious quarrel about the projected union of the Greek and Romish Church. Only 9000 men, capable of bearing arms, were to be found in that great city to defend the walls, besides the Genoese, to whom Galata belonged, under Giustiniani. The emperor was aware that the state of things was hopeless, and that all he could now do was to perish nobly. On the 28th of May, like one at the point of death, he received the sacrament in Aya Sofia, and in the assault he took his place in the ranks of the defenders. He fell, and his body was afterwards discovered among the slain by his purple boots.

While you continue to have the walls on your right, on the left are spread out alternately gardens, cemeteries, likewise uncultivated lands, and the Greek convent of Baluklu, with its umbrageous plantation of elms and plane-trees. The road rises and falls with the undulations of the ground, and, if you look back from the more elevated points, the silvery blue mirror of the Sea of Marmora meets your eye. In the cemeteries were seated Turkish women, eating, as they always are; at the coffee-houses, which are infallibly to be found before every gate, sat men smoking in silence, as they, too,

always are. Then, again, there were solitary spots, where the grasshopper was to be heard chirping in the grass. A peculiar character of peaceful repose was diffused at the foot of these ancient walls, which had beheld so many savage and sanguinary conflicts. An impression of grandeur was thus produced by the whole, while the eye was continually enjoying the new objects which developed themselves at particular points.

At a coffee-house we rested a few minutes in the shade of a plane-tree, and keenly did I regret my inability to draw; for a mosque, with an indescribably graceful cupola and minaret, rose out of a sea of verdure, which overflowed the walls in richly tinted waves: it would have formed a charming picture. In another place, the ruins of the Hebdomon appeared above the wall; but such were always and everywhere the exuberance and freshness of the vegetation, that I could not help exclaiming: "It does not signify—Constantinople must be left in the hands of the children of Mohamed, for Nature herself declares for them, and auses the colour of the Prophet to wave like a streamer from every pinnacle?"

This was a most delicious walk, and it is the only one that you can take with convenience, that is, without being obliged to climb, and without crippling your feet on the stony ways. Here is no such thing as is called with us a promenade—a place planted like a pleasure ground, and arranged for

pedestrians, horse exercise, and carriages. If you inquire for such a place, you are always referred to the great cemetery of Pera, where it is true you find, especially on Sunday, a great number of people walking, but not near so great as that of the dogs which have quartered themselves there, and the hideous howling and barking of which, together with the dreariness of the place on which no care is bestowed, instantly banish all idea of a promenade. Among the cracked and prostrate tombstones of the Armenians and the Catholics, which lie on the one slope, the mother brutes have made their lying-in dormitories, and the whining squeak of their whelps increases the dislike that I have to these places. It is indeed incredible how closely that which is most beautiful and that which is most repulsive lie, in striking and unveiled contrast, to one another. But the scenery of Constantinople is assuredly some of the finest in the world.

Farewell, my dear Clara. Here is constantly something new; to-morrow, I pay my visit to the harem.

## LETTER XIV.

TO MY BROTHER.

Visit to the Harem of Rifât Pasha.

Constantinople, Sept. 22nd. 1843.

MY dear brother, it affords me inexpressible satisfaction to have it in my power to give you to-day some account of a place which is as inaccessible to your foot as are to mine those numerous places closed against me by the significant intimation, "*Ma non le donne*," more especially as one might expect this to contain more interesting mysteries of beauty, of love, of passion, than those others.

I have been to-day in the harem of Rifât Pasha. If you imagine that it is as easy to pay a morning visit at Constantinople as at Berlin or Vienna, you are egregiously mistaken; this was a really perilous expedition, and I have taken a slight dislike to all social connexions extending across the Golden Horn. For it is more difficult to get from the Venetian palace to the residence of Rifât Pasha, than in Berlin to drive down from the Oranienburg to the Halle gate. You must descend the hill of Pera, then cross the crazy bridge, which in two places is so steeply arched, in order to allow vessels to pass under it, that you are obliged to drive down most cautiously with a drag; and lastly proceed through the narrow, horribly paved, up and down streets in

the city, which are so contracted and so crooked, that the fore-horses were sometimes out of sight in turning a corner, and because the way is so execrable, at a foot-pace. The internuncio had, therefore, the kindness to introduce my request, and Countess Stürmer took the trouble to go with me. Now, my dear brother, charming as you may figure a harem to yourself, I must frankly confess that, after seeing two, one has no desire to see a third, and that the interest with which one enters the first arises solely from unacquaintance.

This morning, about ten o'clock, we started from the Venetian palace; Countess Stürmer, a native of Pera, perfect mistress of the Turkish language, and myself. The Turks like early hours, and this was appointed. On the steepest part of the hill of Pera, one of the horses fell; a footman hurt himself severely in going to render assistance, and a second in a less degree; but, for fear of more such accidents, they were ordered not to leave the carriage. You may imagine how I felt. With my personal apprehensions when riding was associated the unpleasant feeling that I was the cause of all these mishaps. I drew breath, when we had conquered the hill and the rotten bridge, and strove to banish the return from my thoughts.

About eleven we arrived at the pasha's residence, where again the entry of the inner court could only be effected by a masterpiece of skill. A dozen

servants, of course all of them eunuchs, were in the lower hall. The stairs were covered with the finest mats, as was also the octagonal ante-hall to which they led, where we found a great number of female slaves, from among whom a lady stepped forth and bade us welcome by giving us her hand and nodding her head. It was the sister of Rifât Pasha, a widow, and mother of two little girls. Then came his wife and saluted us in the same manner; and we were conducted into a saloon contiguous to the ante-room, in which were the mother, the wife, and the little daughter of Muchdar Bey, the Turkish ambassador at Vienna. This saloon was completely Turkish: window after window opposite to the entrance, and windows again half way along the two side-walls; under them a broad sofa covered with white cambric, upon which flowers of different colours were wrought in worsted with the tambour-needle. Before this sofa were two long mattresses, covered with cotton stuff, striped red and white, for those who preferred a very low seat; and, lastly, towards one side, a European couch and chairs, covered with yellow Utrecht velvet, and of old-fashioned make. The gaudily painted walls, the superabundance of small slit-up window curtains, the mats on the floor, the small piece of furniture resembling a cupboard in a niche opposite to the door, were all exactly as in the kiosk of the Grand Signor at the Sweet Waters.

The whole saloon was full of females. The two ladies of the house and the European and Turkish

visitors sat down on the different sofas, while the slaves partly stood at the back of the saloon, partly squatted upon the floor, or performed the duties of attendance: these consisted in handing round sweetmeats, of which the guest takes a spoonful and drinks some water to it, and afterwards coffee, out of the well-known, small, flowered porcelain cups, standing in a sort of silver egg-cup. The coffee is not handed round, like the sweetmeats, upon a tray, but each cup is brought separately, cautiously presented with two fingers, and must be received with the like caution, in the same way, because they are filled to the very brim. When you have emptied it, you need but look up, and one of the slaves in attendance instantly steps forward, and holds out her open hand. You place on it the cup, over which she lays the other open hand, a manœuvre by which all collision of the fingers is avoided, and the diminutive utensil is safely carried away, and which every waiter at the commonest coffee-house executes with great dexterity. In waiting upon the guests, the pasha's little nieces and his daughter-in-law, twelve years old, were very active, though not troublesome or awkward, as is frequently the case with children among us; but they showed the same quiet tact as the slaves; for this belongs to their education.

Had we smoked, the slaves would have had a good deal more to do. Muchdar Bey's mother now took a tchibook; the other ladies did not smoke, perhaps



out of courtesy to us. You will be curious to know how they look, and I am truly sorry to say that we have not found in them a trace of beauty. The pasha's sister has a face that bespeaks extreme good nature and benevolence: but it is so plump and round, and her figure in general so remarkably squat, as to give me the idea of a full moon. She wore a lilac taffeta spencer, and a white silk gown with flowers of various colours, the skirt slit up before and at each side, and the hinder part terminating in a train, both garments so excessively tight that you would be surprised how that bulky form could find room in it. No part of the dress had plaits but the prodigiously wide trowsers of golden-yellow taffeta, which descended so low and in so many folds as to render the whole foot invisible, and to make it impossible to judge whether it was covered by stocking, slipper only, or nothing at all. On her head, the lady wore the red cap with blue tassel, from beneath which, on the middle of the forehead, protruded a bunch of false curls, which was entwined with three braids of hair, and adorned with three flowers of diamonds. The narrow sleeves of the spencer were slit up at the wrist, and under-sleeves of white muslin, with fringes and bows of lilac silk, hung from beneath them, like enormous ruffles. The hands had no other ornament, but nails stained with henna.

Such was the dress of all the ladies, only of different colours; not all the slaves were in silks, and

the ladies only wore diamonds. The children were most profusely dressed, and their silk trains and the diamonds and feathers on, I suspect, with an artificial abundance of braids and curls, looked very singular. Some of the spencers were closed as high as the throat with hooks and eyes; some not at all. Muchdar Bey's mother, in particular, exhibited her full bust, in a manner that in Europe would appear rather comic in an elderly lady. In all these dresses my eye missed the goodly sight of a white washable stuff, which, according to our notions, is necessary for every dress, and which must accompany even the most costly of velvet or satin, in the form of chemisette or sleeves—for those under-sleeves, adorned with coloured silk, made by no means the impression which something washable would have done. According to our taste, these dresses were none of them clean enough.

A principal topic of conversation was the difference between the European and Turkish ladies' costumes, and they expressed themselves particularly adverse to stays. But their spencers are so tight as to be nearly equivalent to the latter. Of course, the conversation was confined to externals; for, to questions which interested me most, for instance, on what footing is a favourite slave in regard to the mistress of the house, they returned no answer when our interpreter adverted to the subject. They talked, nevertheless, of other things, horrible, criminal, unheard of in Europe, as being universally customary: and so I

learned that the women, when they have had one or two accouchements and are tired of them, destroy their unborn children.

We inquired also concerning their occupations, and were told that they had a prodigious deal to do; but, on the other hand, they admitted that all the embroidery and the household duties were performed by slaves, so that I cannot conceive what it really is that they fill up their time with. To receive many visits, the higher the person, the more numerous, and always for the whole day—this, so said our interpreter, is one of the principal employments of the Turkish ladies. That is, indeed, a horrid robbery of time; but to us it appears only like sleepy indolence. I would fain have asked: but are you not ready to die of *ennui*, in your monotonous seclusion, which deprives you of all participation in the life of your husband? You know not his friends or his foes, the sphere of his operations or his employments; nay, not even the world and the relations in which he lives. He shares nothing with you, and you are obliged to share himself with your slaves—are you not then weary to death of so degrading an existence?—Probably I should have been answered, No; for life in the round of ancient, established custom, is also life.

And then they have at their disposal that substitute of all women who have no powerful interest in life, and which is found as frequently in European society as in the Turkish harem—intrigue. Of

course this is confined to the narrowest, I might say, the lowest circle ; but in it they seek hundreds, thousands of cross and by-roads, to arrive at their object. And, that you may see, my dear Dinand, that people here as well as in our civilized society, are fond of talking about the most private affairs of their dear neighbours, I will tell you what is said about Rifât Pasha's harem, and which made us curious concerning *l'objet aimé*.

Well then, Rifât Pasha has a most peculiarly favoured female slave, who excited the jealousy of his wife to such a degree, that the latter made every possible effort to pull down her rival from her high position. Of course in vain. So long as one is loved, the machinations of others do no injury, and frequently they even serve to strengthen afresh an already wavering affection : so averse is man to submit to contradiction in the sphere of the feelings ; for reason is required in order to give ear to reason, and love and reason do not even lie within the same sphere. "A love that is not a miracle, is no love at all,"—so says the author of the Emperor Octavian, and it is the finest thing that Tieck ever said ; but reason has, as every body knows, and as Rationalists have proved over and over again, nothing to do with miracles. To break the spell of that favourite, the wife had recourse to a truly desperate expedient. She directed the most beautiful and the most fascinating slave in Constantinople to be purchased, and presented her to her husband, content to endure the

new rival, so she could but overthrow the old one. Is not this a genuine harem expedient?—So wilful and so disconsolate? Any other, only not that!—not that!

You will, no doubt, be as curious to learn the result of this scheme as we were. Well, then, all was in vain: the favourite retained her situation. The latter was to-day among the attendant slaves, and not to be distinguished from them but by her exquisitely beautiful figure:—tall and slender as a nymph, supple and pliable as an osier, she formed an extraordinary contrast to the uncouth shapes of the greater number. Perhaps, however, we might scarcely have remarked her, had not the ladies, after the dinner, of which I shall presently give you an account, stopped in the dining-room to perform their ablutions, while we were conducted back into the saloon by some slaves. She was of the number, and all at once we were struck by her handsome person; for she spoke, she smiled, she was cheerful, and that made her handsome. Hers was one of those faces of which people say, "But how plain she is! what small eyes! what a large mouth!" Suddenly, the irregular features were stripped, as it were, of their plainness, and the face appeared transfigured. A Greek slave, who seemed to perform the office of stewardess in the harem, and with whom our interpreter conversed in her native language, said that this was the favourite slave; but where the beauty was, whether they did not choose to let us see her, or whether she had been

sent away because she had not accomplished the desired purpose, we did not learn; and only so much is certain, that among all these females there was not a single beautiful face, and but a single interesting one, and this was precisely the favourite's.

Animated and good-humoured as she had just now appeared while conversing with our interpreter, so grave and motionless she became when the ladies of the house entered. She instantly retired with the other slaves to the back of the room, stood still there, without changing a feature, covered her hands with her long under-sleeves—covered hands are a sign of respect among the 'Turks—helped to wait on the company, and now and then squatted upon her heels like the rest, and just as ungainly as they. This cannot be an enviable existence:—to be loved by the husband and hated by the wife, and at the same time to be a slave in attendance on that wife. Still she did not look in the least unhappy or melancholy, for her lot is very ancient, as ancient as the time of the patriarch Abraham. But none can be expelled from the harem, like poor Hagar. If she sinks in favour she enters the circle of the ordinary servants, and makes way for the new star.

When our visit had lasted about an hour, we were for putting an end to it; but, instead of that, were invited to breakfast, and conducted through the octagonal ante-chamber into a long eating-room, which had windows at its two short ends, and was, of course, admirably adapted for its destination, as the light

did not strike upon the eyes of any of the party. At the entrance stood female slaves in a semi-circle, some with wash-hand basins, others with jugs, and towels, embroidered on the edge with gold and silk of various colours. Water was poured over our hands, and the Turkish ladies thoroughly prepared themselves for eating. Muchdar Bey's mother took off her spencer, that she might have more freedom in her movements; and the others turned up their under-sleeves, or tucked them beneath the narrow ones of the spencer. We then seated ourselves on European chairs, at a long table, set out precisely in the European style, upon which were vases of flowers, glasses, plates, none but objects to which we were accustomed; and the slaves waited upon us in the same manner as our own servants do.

It was a complete dinner, which began with European soup and other dishes, and we were agreeably surprised to see that a clean silver knife and fork accompanied every change of plate. Should you have expected this hyper-gentility in a harem? After the soup, a plate, containing an entire large fowl, was handed to each person, then one with a fish, and then I know not what, for Turkish dishes came in for a change, many very sweet and others excessively greasy—a real abomination to me. Many dishes were handed round, and when we did not help ourselves at all, or in the opinion of the slaves not in sufficient quantity, they put more upon our plates. There was, upon the whole, a curious medley of

foreign and domestic manners, customs, and dishes. Of course, none but the ladies of the house and their guests partook of the dinner; but the slaves talked unrestrained with them and among themselves.

The pasha's sister sat beside me. For soup, cream, and the like, she used a spoon of black horn, and for everything else, her fingers only. A truly remarkable sight! diamonds in the hair, and all the ten fingers, with orange-coloured nails, dripping with fat and sauce! The other ladies, of course, fed themselves in the same manner. Actively as their hands were engaged in this occupation, I had opportunity to observe them: they were small, fleshy, with short, stumpy, undeveloped fingers—fingers which probably are strangers to every other kind of activity but that in which we employ our forks. I must confess to you, that I almost fancied they were webbed. After, at least, twenty different dishes, the pilaw concluded the repast. For dessert, we take sweetmeats; the Turks take a plateful of rice and mutton; and so the ladies socially helped themselves from the same dish with their hands, and ate with a high relish. After such service, the hands certainly require a more thorough washing than we are accustomed to give ours in the small dark blue glass bowls. I had almost forgotten to mention that, beside us foreigners was placed champagne in cut-glass decanters; but we refrained from giving any scandal to the followers of the Koran, and did not test its genuineness.



After dinner we returned to the saloon, took coffee and ices, and, after a short time, again wished to take our leave ; for conversation, by means of an interpreter is always dull, and, when continued for hours together, becomes absolutely tiresome ; but we were assured that the pasha would return immediately from the Diwan, and begged to stay a little longer. Now, I should have been glad to be entertained in the way invariably described in eastern stories ; with the singing, dancing, and lute-playing of the slaves ; for, as it is beneath the dignity of Turkish ladies to cultivate talents of this kind, they ought at least to take care to have about them persons capable of varying the monotony of the harem by such amusements. But in this there was neither beauty nor talent.

You cannot conceive how unpleasant it is to speak with persons who only see the world from behind their grated windows, and the curtains of their araba, and who, nevertheless, are by no means abstracted from worldly interests, but are wholly and solely absorbed in them ; for here the minds are engaged to a greater degree than even the body. Existence becomes frightfully material. We inquired how marriages were brought about, with this total separation of the sexes, and learned that these are in general managed by the mothers, who go from one harem to another, and make matches for their sons and daughters, to which the latter, from their extreme youth and inexperience, assent without

opposition, as soon as the mothers have found suitable partners for them.

Rifât Pasha's son, a lad of fifteen, has been married these six months to a girl of twelve. She had waited upon us very attentively when we took coffee on our first arrival, and learned that she was the pasha's daughter-in-law. At length, the son came in: he seemed, both in person and behaviour to be well suited to his little childish wife: both look quite as immature and undeveloped as any young persons among us at the ages of twelve and fifteen years: and, as people marry to *live* not to *play* together, these have manifestly done so too early. But is it not a folly, nay almost a sin, thus to rob poor children of their childhood, and to pluck off the flowers of their youth before the time?

It just occurs to me that I have not yet said any thing about the wife of the pasha; it is because we saw least of her: she was probably engaged by the dinner, that is, by the European arrangements. She also wore superb diamonds, and in her youth, while her delicate features still retained their freshness, she may have been very handsome. Now she was the less so, as they had no prepossessing expression.

At length we broke up, without awaiting the arrival of the pasha, and, with the same ceremonies in the circle of the slaves, we took our leave, and the son accompanied us down stairs. Our return was unattended with accident; at the dangerous

places we walked up the hill, and about four o'clock I was again seated in my lodgings, glad to have seen a harem, and well content if I were never to visit another.

Most of the ladies of Pera, as I learned from our interpreter, speak more or less fluently both Turkish and modern Greek, the latter on account of the servants, who are almost all Greeks, and have a great capacity for learning foreign languages. The Perote families are mostly Italians, Venetians, and Genoese, but have been long settled for the sake of trade at Pera, and become denizens. Their acquaintance with the Turkish language has brought them into connexion with all the foreign embassies in Constantinople, in which individual members of them held the important post of dragoman; for you know that Austria alone has an Oriental seminary, in which young men are trained for eastern diplomatic business. The Perotes have no other country but the hill of Pera, and no other national interest but that of the State into whose service they have entered. Is not this an absolutely abnormal phenomenon? I do not think that there is elsewhere in the world anything like this homelessness, which has established itself here.

Farewell, my dear brother !

## LETTER XV.

TO MY BROTHER.

Travelling Disappointment—Excursion to the Aqueducts of Belgrade.

Constantinople, September 24th. 1843.

To the account of the harem, which I gave you the day before yesterday, I add one more short letter, for I have leisure, as this is a day of rest. I took a ride yesterday to Belgrade, and it has so excessively fatigued me, that I shall not undertake any more long excursions. In travelling, you can never do exactly what you wish: you cannot arrange matters so but that you are obliged to give up many things which you are desirous of seeing, as is my case in regard to the little trip to Brusa. Every eight days a small steamer starts for Mundania, on the Sea of Marmora, and returns hither on the fourth day, so that one has just time to go to Brusa, situated on a delightful plain, at the foot of the Bithynian Olympus, and to ascend the mountain itself. I was extremely desirous to see that country, famed for being one of the finest in the East, and to visit the city which was the first residence of the Ottoman sultans; but it has always so happened that I was engaged on Fridays, when the steamer sets out. On the first Friday I wanted to see the sultan on his return from the mosque; on the second,

to hear the howling dervises ; on the third, it rained ; and on the fourth, the day before yesterday, I had to pay my visit to the harem, which could not be postponed, partly because Ramadan, the great fast of the Mohamedans, is about to commence, and partly because I am obliged to leave the day after to-morrow, if I mean to go by the Austrian Lloyd to Beyrout, and that I am decided to do, because I cannot make up my mind to take a passage in the steamer which departs a fortnight later under the Turkish flag for Syria, as it is especially destined for Turkish passengers. Thus, to my great regret, I was forced to give up the trip to Brusa, and instead of surveying to-day the plains of Asia Minor from Olympus, I must content myself with having beheld it yesterday evening in resplendent beauty, with its snowy crown reflecting a roseate radiance.

I rode to Belgrade on account of its celebrated aqueducts, and partly to try a saddle, which I shall absolutely want for my Syrian journey ; for I have determined to perform it with all possible convenience, because I shall have unavoidable fatigues enough to encounter. At least, so say some gentlemen, who have just made that journey, and who now feel such need to rest and recruit themselves, that to them Constantinople seems extremely comfortable, and but little Oriental ; whereas, to us it is the very reverse. If, then, there are really such prodigious toils to undergo, I must try to lighten them as much as I can ; for when I am over-fatigued in body, the

senses are no longer capable of conveying to the soul impressions of beauty and majesty, and then I should have made the whole tour to no purpose.

From all that I am told here, I conclude that the main point is to keep stedfastly in view the special object for which it is made, in order not to be frequently put out of humour and disheartened. I make it to acquaint myself with the countries where once great civilizations sprung forth, like blossoms, from the stem of their religions, and decayed when the pollen of those blossoms ceased to fructify. I make it to see those places where our civilization, the most multifarious of all that ever existed, had its origin. Pleasure, amusement, feasts of intellect and of art, an uninterrupted succession of natural beauties, I expect not, I seek not: if I desired these, I would go to Paris, then to Italy, then to Switzerland; I might do so in the same time, with less expense, without fatigue; my object is to go from the world that *is* to the world that *was*, from the European present to the Oriental past. There, melancholy deserts, ruins, desolations, must prevail, and there, single and solitary as the stars emerging from a clouded sky, must arise majestic, consolatory, cheering recollections, to which the spirit attaches its hopes, and deduces what *is to be* from what *has been*. Hopes, I would extract—nothing but hopes . . . not for myself, not for others alone, but for us all. In Europe, the aspect of things is so

hopeless, so perturbed ! Almost every one is out of his place, and is secretly or openly seeking another. All that subsists is to be altered, re-modelled, or even overturned. Every one feels the necessity of reform, but not one has hit upon the precise new form, according to which things are to be moulded. Neither religion, nor society, nor the State, stands any longer on the old solid base. The principles from which they have hitherto developed themselves are disputed, or absolutely denied. I am filled with anxiety when I observe all this on the spot. But, if I am in the East, if I contemplate the ruins of the Temple of the Sun at Baalbec, or Omar's mosque upon the Temple of Solomon, or the sand over the marvellous works of Memphis and Thebes ; if I reflect at the same time that such grandeur, power, and magnificence were doomed to perish, and that our whole great western civilization, fresh and new, may, nevertheless, follow them ; this consideration inspires me with confidence for a yet unknown, but certain, and in its kind, perfect phasis, that will commence over the ruins of our world. For there will be ruins greater than those of Baalbec and Thebes put together. They are already making their appearance ; men are merely keeping them together for a while with iron clamps, and not one of them has the courage to say : " Look, they are but ruins ! "

But which of us, reflecting upon the state of religion, society, and governments, has not asked

himself a hundred times, "How long will this last?" Not, therefore, to gather recollections for myself, but to gather hopes, hopes which have not the slightest reference to myself and my own person, I make this tour; for I hope to write a not uninteresting book concerning it; I hope not to be poetically excited by it, neither do I hope to lead an easy happy life while making it; only just what I have told you above: and this need of hope must be very great, since it urges me to confront courageously all the unavoidable inconveniences with which the journey is attended. But only those which are unavoidable! that I am resolved; for I have no such intention as to perform a pilgrimage in the spirit of the piety of the middle ages, accompanied with voluntary privations and mortifications. As for mortifications, my dear Dinand, I am too much the child of my ease-loving age not to execrate them with all my heart. And yet I am doing things every moment which would give you a right to ask: "But why torment yourself so?" Ah, my dear brother, if there were no contradictions in human souls, we should soon come to an understanding with ourselves and with others.

At the mention of Belgrade, you will certainly think of the capital of Servia. But it is only indirectly that you may do so; for, when the Turks took that city, many of its inhabitants abandoned it, and settled in a village a few miles from Constantinople, and that is the little Thracian Belgrade. It had its



moment of fashion, when Lady Mary Wortley Montague, wife of the English ambassador to the Porte, more than a hundred years ago, passed the fine season there. Whoever has learned English must have read her exquisitely beautiful Letters from Constantinople, and it is really a pity that they are still treated only as a school book. At present Belgrade is considered as an unhealthy place to live at. The many waters and the overshadowing trees are said to generate fevers : people content themselves with taking a ride thither to see these things, which, in the eyes of the Turks, are at once curiosities and the quintessence of all beauty. How highly they prize trees and streams is manifested by the designations of the "Celestial Waters," and the "Sweet Waters," and by their particular fondness for visiting both these places. But Belgrade is far too distant for the Turks ; none but Europeans go thither. The wood of Belgrade is in a manner sacred. Not a tree in it is felled. It feeds the numerous springs that supply Constantinople with water.

At eight o'clock yesterday morning, we rode through the *grand champ*, as the great cemetery is commonly called, and past the great barracks, the guns of which command the Place, a spot peculiarly adapted for rioting, and part of the city. Now-days there are no riots, but of dogs against equestrians. We descended to the Sweet Waters, and then entered the fields of Thrace, which, treeless and untilled, form far and wide a succession of hills. In

deep places, caused probably by the recent heavy rains, the meadow-grounds were quite swampy; those that lay higher and drier were so covered with thyme as to impart a strong scent to the whole atmosphere, before the plant was trampled upon by the horses. Then the brisk morning breeze wafted to us absolute waves of aroma. Perfumes in the pure open air are to me something enchanting, and, when coming from Constantinople, they were rendered doubly gratifying by the charm of novelty.

By degrees the country becomes more pleasing: individual trees make their appearance; on elevated points you perceive aqueducts running from hill to hill: you then ride on through low grounds where all prospect is shut out. Thus you first come to the aqueduct of the emperor Justinian, who, after the Roman fashion, reared one range of arcades upon another, and these support the channel which conveys the water. It is a pity that the arches are not of uniform width, and have not a handsome contour.

Now commences the wood, composed chiefly of chesnuts and oaks. But do not figure to yourself such oaks as yours in Holstein. Wherever I have seen oaks, I have been obliged to confess that the oak needs German soil to develop itself in its full vigour. They are not so thick, not so spreading, and by far not so lofty, as with us. The very leaves are smaller. They may be of another species—that I will not pretend to decide; but, in comparison

with the oaks of North Germany, these look stunted. The wood itself contains abundance of bushes and underwood: sometimes it ceases, and then begins again: of course, it does not receive that attention which is paid to our forests. But, as the only one in Rumeli, it is made much of, and thought beautiful.

The aqueducts of the emperor Andronicus and sultan Othman are basins, the pipes of which are not visible. They are situated near the village of Pyrgos, beyond which commences the wood of Belgrade properly so called, consisting chiefly of the eatable chesnut-tree, which looks just like that of Pyrgos. The character of the whole is extremely tranquil and almost melancholy, as woody, and at the same time thinly peopled tracts almost always are. You see no inhabitants, no field or garden labour going forward, no activity of any kind. The ways are foot-paths and scarcely that. Beyond the wood, you get into a quite open country. At this time of the year, too, the woods, even with us are still as death, in the absence of the dear little birds, which make them so lively in spring, by their cheerful chirping. They have had a summer full of joy and love: now, the pleasures of their little life are past, they must attend only to the means of prolonging it. To me there is nothing more melancholy than a very fine day at the end of summer in a wood; and I know nothing more enlivening than a June day in the same place.

About one o'clock having passed some extensive ponds, we arrived at Belgrade. We had been round to the different aqueducts, and on horseback ever since eight o'clock, consequently we were rather hungry; and at the inn—or what shall I call the hovel before which we alighted?—there was nothing to be got but butter, black coffee, and fresh water. I had hoped to meet with a thing that I am very fond of, *giaúrd*, a kind of sour milk which the Turks prepare most excellently: but there was none in the village. The dragoman was sent out a second time to forage, and after a long absence he brought back a few fresh eggs, some sweet milk, and a piece of a new loaf; the latter so moist, that it seemed to have been rather washed than baked. To this fire our dinner was limited, to my very great satisfaction. One sees on such occasions upon how little it is possible to live; and I was, moreover, amused by the striking contrast between my last three dinners. To-day I sat upon a balcony, canopied by the open sky, in the shade of a filthy hut, and ate out of a black pan the eggs which some peasant-woman had boiled. Yesterday, I dined in the harem of the Turkish minister for foreign affairs, with all the elegance which Turkish habits, exchanged for European, admit of; and the day before, at the inter-nuncio's, with diplomatists, with travellers of different nations, with persons of celebrated names—in short, in the best society. Is not this really diverting?

The aqueduct of Sultan Mahmoud, which we

visited after our frugal meal, is by far the handsomest of all—a very spacious reservoir of snow-white marble, with open and covered basins, connected by terraces, so that the whole structure looks like a grand palace, which, moreover, is situated in the thickest part of the wood. This is an interesting spot, at which we tarried longest, because we met with acquaintances among a larger company. But, when I had to mount again, I found myself so tired that I had rather declined giving “my kingdom for a horse.”

We had no need to return through Belgrade and Pyrgos, but took a nearer route, leading out of the wood, above Buyúkderé into the road from that place to Constantinople: but I was tired, for, since I was in the Pyrenees, I had not been on horseback, and in that state the shortest way is too long. For the rest, on that elevated point above Buyúkderé, we had an incomparably beautiful view. Hills sloped down to the very place, which lay at the bottom, on its spacious bay, as on a tranquil lake. Between the hills of both shores, the Bosphorus disappeared and appeared again, according to its own windings and those of the bay. On the left was spread out the Black Sea, and on the right, beyond the Propontis, extended the hilly coast of Anatoli, above which towered, in brilliant majesty, the royal Olympus, clad in the purple radiance of evening. Add to this the transparent atmosphere, and the blazing glory of sunset in the South; and

yet, it was really a shame, but yet I was and continued to be tired; and right glad was I, when, at length, about half past seven, we reached our quarters.

Now, my dear brother, farewell, and do not take it amiss that I break off my letters so abruptly and unceremoniously. Were I to enter into assurances of affection, there would be no end to them; and every moment I have is bespoken. Besides, you must take it for granted that I think of you, the dear and distant objects of my love—this my frequent letters attest. So be not too particular about the form.

## LETTER XVI.

### TO MY MOTHER.

The Palace of Tchiragan—Ramadan—Concluding Observations—  
My Firman.

Constantinople, September 25th, 1843.

THIS is the last letter, my dearly beloved mamma, that I shall write to you from this city. All the preparations for my departure are made, and to-morrow afternoon I set out for Smyrna. I am the more gratified that I could this morning obtain access to the interior of the sultan's palace of Tchiragan, after I had so often admired the exterior; and I will give you a hasty account how this was managed. The imperial gardener, who is to lay out the gardens

to that palace, is a German, and comes occasionally to Madame Balbiani's. I saw him a few days ago, and he undertook to introduce me into the palace without a firman ; so, at nine o'clock this morning, a caique conveyed us to the place of destination.

I believe I have already told you that this palace is an agglomeration of several and totally diverse pavilions, which are united by galleries into, not a regular, but an harmonious whole ; the marble steps of which, washed by the Bosphorus, and the marble colonnade mirrored in its waters, form particularly pleasant and conspicuous objects. Now the interior is neither the one nor the other ; for there that singular Turkish taste, which we cannot call anything but tasteless, and the material of which it is built, stucco and wood, appear too prominently. The principal ornaments of the apartments are mirrors and clocks, four, six, eight, in each. Some of the clocks are musical ; and the first thing that was done for our gratification in one apartment was to set all the six clocks a-playing at once. The intention was to surprise us, and we were surprised !

The clocks were almost all from Paris, and of that exquisitely beautiful bronze, with parti-coloured enamel, the art of making which is confined to that city. They must have heard at Constantinople of the European fashion of placing all sorts of costly, curious, and useless knick-knacks on tables and mantel-pieces ; and they have imitated it in the palace of Tchiragan to such an excess as to set

little miserable decanters, paltry porcelain vases with withered flowers, and all sorts of wretched porcelain ware on the polished tables. Before one clock lay, for instance a trout: a servant lifted up the upper half, and showed us that it was in reality a sort of terrine, with a cover. Of the like kind were all those things that had not come as presents; but even these, for instance, two porcelain vases, with the portraits of the emperor and empress of Russia were not by far so magnificent as royal presents of this kind usually are in Europe. Coloured lithographs, representing views in Switzerland and all the capitals in Europe, hung against the gaudily painted walls of several of the apartments; on the other hand, broad sofas, with cushions, covered with purple or crimson and gold stuff, stood in most of them.

One room is very handsome: it is situated in the pavilion with the marble colonnade, and is the grand audience-chamber, where the throne of the Grand Signor is placed on solemn occasions. In general, it stands quite empty: but it is large and lofty, and the extremely elegant ceiling, wrought in stucco, is supported by pillars, which, at first sight, you would take for marble, because you could scarcely suppose that those without are of marble, and those within of plaster. Yet such is the fact: they are of plaster, and each of them is regularly entwined with a wreath of vine leaves.

In another pavilion the sultan passes the morning,



after he has left the harem, in which he sleeps ; but the pavilion containing this, with its grated windows, was not shown to us. Another again is his afternoon abode, and, in one of the rooms there, I was struck by the singular door and window drapery, of black taffeta and white muslin, with light blue fringe. In the upper story are two or three rooms that are said to be elegant, and a small saloon destined for the reception of the foreign ministers. Here had been placed all the most costly candelabra, vases, mirrors, and European arm-chairs, covered with dark red satin ; and thus was produced a whole neither elegant nor superb.

The garden of this palace is quite new, situated on the steep and totally bare side of a hill, where as yet, nothing is to be seen that would give us the idea of a garden—no flowers, no shade, no verdure, no water, nothing but the heavenly view of the Bosphorus ; perhaps in ten or twelve years it may be transformed into a garden. In the centre, between the pavilions, is a parterre of flowers, where, however, you see nothing rare or handsome but what you find in ours—climbing roses, dahlias, and the like. Orange and lemon trees stand in pots, as with us, and are kept in winter in hot-houses.

Did you expect that I should give you such a meagre account of the Serai of the Grand Signor ? It is indeed no fault of mine ; for I know not what else to say about a building without taste, without treasures of art, without recollections ;

and no one can say more, if he adheres to the truth. I hope that all my descriptions of Constantinople will be strictly consonant with truth, because I am come hither a perfect novice, without prepossession for or against it. In Europe, this is almost impossible, because there you interest yourself in one way or another, long beforehand, for the country in which you intend to travel. At least, I was so far a novice that I know not whether any one has yet written a description of Constantinople. Now, my dearest mother, I wish that you may not be acquainted with any either, and then mine will at least have the little charm of novelty for you.

To-day Ramadan commences ; that is, the great twenty-eight days' fast of the Mohamedans, which they are obliged to observe so strictly, that from sunrise to sunset they must not drink a drop, nor eat a morsel, nor smoke a tchibook. At the moment when the sun sets a gun is fired ; this is the signal that they may take refreshment : all rush to the coffee-houses, and doubly indulge themselves, to make amends for the severe privation. For the populace, for the labouring class, it is really severe. A couple of boatmen, for example, who have to row to Buyúkderé and back, must not drink a glass of water, even though they are fainting for want of it. The rich take their ease : they sleep the greater part of the day, and are up and about at night.

As the Turks have not solar years like us, but lunar years, Ramadan falls eleven days earlier every

year, and, after a series of years, it will happen in the hottest and longest summer days, and then it will be really cruel. At the conclusion of the Ramadan, there is the three days' festival of Bairam, celebrated with rejoicings, amusements, and religious ceremonies in the illuminated mosques. Yesterday the minarets and the vessels were illuminated, but not much; and it was a pretty sight to see these stars fallen, as it were, from heaven, hovering here in the air, yonder over the water. It is impossible to describe the effect produced by the various illuminations, combined with the profusion of water in the environs, which are also rich in verdure: if I have attempted it here and there, I have not been successful; and you may believe that Constantinople surpasses every description.

A few days since, when I rode to Belgrade, I had risen earlier than usual, and beheld a truly enchanting scene: the mists of morning covered mysteriously the whole space; beyond them, the mighty sun darted forth his rays, in order to break through; and around them, on vigorous wings, flew the morning wind, to scare them off, and to prepare a way for the light. They began gradually to sink gently, slowly; here appeared a glistening cupola, there a white minaret, and there another, and another; and upon every object that projected above the fog, resembling a sea covered with silvery foam, the sun threw his roseate rays, his first, fresh, young glance of love; and, as if built of rose-coloured marble upon a base

of mother of pearl, there stood the beautiful edifices, just like those we read of in fairy tales. But the higher the sun rose, the lower sank the fog, so that by degrees the more elevated groups of houses made their appearance, then clumps of cypresses, then the masts of the vessels, and, lastly, the whole mighty mass of the city, which must be seen at a distance only, if you would wish to be nothing but charmed by it. Enter it—the spell is broken! it is then no fairy city, but a filthy city; and it loses, on a nearer approach, not merely as a whole, but taken individually, as I have just found so strikingly exemplified in the case of the palace of Tchiragan.

Nevertheless, or perhaps for that very reason, Constantinople is exceedingly well worth seeing, because the union of the beautiful and the repulsive, which strikes the eye, is so unveiled, and impresses upon the whole a stamp of disorder, confusion, and neglect, which is again characteristic of the internal state of the empire in general. In many things, the government is taking pains to make improvements. Three young German physicians, trained here by a physician from Vienna, lately received their degree in the presence of the sultan and all the high functionaries, and took an official oath—a thing that was never before heard of. This ceremony was performed with great solemnity, and the sultan is said to have been interested and somewhat touched by it. But the sympathies of a monarch ought to be of a creative nature; active ones are not even sufficient; and

with such as are merely passive, no great advances can be made. Experiments are tried ; if they fail the affair is dropped ; whereas a monarch with creative sympathies has at his command a thousand means, even though a thing has miscarried twenty times, to accomplish it at last. But I do not believe that either Abdoul Medjid, or any other Grand Signor brought up in the Princes' Cage by women and eunuchs, will attain to a development which at once knows and wills. For this, indeed, the endowments of Heaven, the free gifts of God, are the principal point ; and the regenerating genius of a prince depends as little upon inclination, humour, or education, as a financial, or an artistical, or any other : but, since I have seen a harem, this soil seems to me fit only for producing nothing but stunted plants ; and in it a sultan vegetates till he ascends the throne.

And then, I find every thing here so futureless ! Those Europeans, who enter the Turkish service, come by way of experiment for a number of years, to introduce this or that, and go away again when the time for which they have engaged themselves is expired ; or, they come to make money, for they are handsomely paid, and depart as soon as they have attained that object : or, lastly, they come as adventurers, for the purpose of trying their fortune in Turkey. Not a single European comes hither out of interest for the people or the country, and still less does one stay here for any other than a personal object : what advantage, what benefit, for a perma-

nence, for futurity, can thence accrue to a country, to a nation?

Most of the higher Turkish officials are purchased slaves. A slave has no mother country: he cannot have one: he lives for himself alone. He must keep, to a certain degree, within the circle of his duties; but whence is he to derive that impulse to an activity extending beyond the sphere of antiquated routine? and when the wheels of a state-machine have kept it moving for centuries together, they get old and crazy, and do not revolve with sufficient freedom and vigour:—but he takes good care not to meddle with them. Add to this, that the population of Turkey is diminishing from year to year, as is the case in all misgoverned countries, partly owing to polygamy, partly, as I am told, to the universal practice of women destroying their unborn offspring, when tired of the annoyance of lying-in: and I ask, how can hopes be entertained of young, healthy shoots for the future, when the marrow of the tree is destitute of vital power? A State governed by slaves; families in which the women dislike to be mothers, because they are slaves, not wives—what can be more contrary to nature, and what else can this state of things betoken but an advanced stage of decline? So it was in ancient Rome: there too this dominion of freedmen, there too this decrease of population, there too this repugnance of the women to become mothers, but, it is true, out of lewdness only, which I have not heard attributed to the Turkish women; but or

ancient Rome there had preceded a glory, which kept pace with the subsequent decline, and which the Turkish empire has been very far from attaining. Rome, however, had a period of freedom, and that the most brilliant—a free youth. Turkey has ever been a realm of despotism and slavery.

By way of conclusion, here is a touch of the comic: I have at length obtained the firman which I solicited for the prosecution of my tour, from the ministry for foreign affairs—to use the European term, for I am not acquainted with the Turkish designation. I am told that it is unnecessary, but that does not signify; in this country one must be prepared for all contingencies. But it cost a good deal of trouble to get it, and the secretary whose duty it is to draw up such a firman, not daring to take the responsibility of furnishing it upon himself alone, higher officials were consulted. Now, guess why! Because no woman ever applied for a firman before. It was reserved for me to introduce this unparalleled case into the annals of the Ottoman empire; and I shall not fail to bring this important document back with me to Europe, because it is probably unique in its kind in the world. For the rest, it looks mean enough, and, though rare as the Phoenix, it is by no means beautiful as the Phoenix.

Now farewell a thousand and a thousand times, my much loved mamma, and wish me a prosperous voyage, for we have still windy and unsettled weather, and I shall have to be about eight days at sea. I kiss your hand.

## LETTER XVII.

TO MY MOTHER.

Voyage through the Bosphorus, the Propontis, and the Dardanelles, to Smyrna—Ionia—The Seven Churches—Excursion to Burnabad—Handsome Smyrniote Women—Walk to the Ruins of the Castle and through the City.

Smyrna, September 29th. 1843.

I AM now in Asia, only Asia Minor indeed, but yet really and nominally out of our quarter of the globe. Now I beg you, my beloved mamma, above all things, to be perfectly assured that I am by no means prepared, out of joy at being in Asia, to think everything beautiful and superb. Not at all—I am determined, if it please God, to keep my eye unprejudiced, and to think only that beautiful which makes such an impression upon me, no matter whether in Asia or Europe. Having premised thus much, I confidently assert that Smyrna has nothing beautiful but its women and its grapes.

But, before I say anything about Smyrna, I shall give you some account of my voyage, and the more readily, because I have been unusually well. This gives me hope, and I cannot help thinking, "Now I have conquered sea-sickness for ever; now I shall certainly be able to bear the sea!" Whether that is the case, this evening will show, for the wind is vehement, and we start at six o'clock.

On Tuesday, the 26th. at four in the afternoon,



the good steamer *Seri Pervas* conveyed us out of the Golden Horn, through the Bosphorus, into the Propontis, and, rapid as was its progress, we could see Constantinople spread out far and wide, and till sunset, admirably illuminated. I was the fortunate sole possessor of the ladies' cabin, had light and air in it, and to these circumstances I verily believe it is owing that I felt so well. At night, a quite contrary wind sprang up, a south wind with a high sea, and both accompanied us to the entrance into the bay of Symrna, that is, above twenty-four hours. I spent them lying quietly on my sofa in the cabin—this I call being well at sea—and had the different points named to me as we passed them. Alas! merely points that have become poems, and merely names that sound like songs!

Libyssa, Hannibal's grave! That was an enemy worthy of ancient Rome, for he was as great as the greatest of her sons. Here he died, in the foreign land of Bithynia, a voluntary death by poison, when his star had ceased to shower destruction on the heads of his foes. When he had no further means for indulging active hatred, he resolved to die, and died. Ah! how this pleases me in the ancients! Their voluntary death is not by any means to be called suicide. They were always full of one great unselfish idea, and parted from life without convulsions of selfish despair, as soon as it ceased to find its place in the world.

Xerxes crossed the Dardanelles with his army, and

was vanquished by little Athens. The Ottomans too crossed the Dardanelles, and took Gallipoli, and the extensive empire of Byzantium was not capable of driving them back into Asia Minor.

There is the coast of Ilion in the plain of Troy, where peacefully rise the mounds which cover the two mortal foes, Hector and Achilles, as well as that of Patroclus, and which proclaim from one thousand years to another, their own glory and the immortality of the blind bard who sang their achievements. Ah ! old Homer, how thou wouldst smile, didst thou but know the pains taken by the speculation of our petty, hollow age, to draw thy great and fertile existence into the beggarly sphere of doubt !

When you leave the Dardanelles, formerly called the Hellespont, the shores of which are far inferior in beauty to the Bosphorus, the first islands in the Archipelago are Imbros, Lemnos, and Tenedos ! then Mitylene, the ancient Lesbos. It was to the coast of Lesbos that the head of Orpheus floated, after the wonderful singer, who had conquered the nether world by his love, and the rude brutal powers by his music, was murdered by the Thracian Mænades. In his profound inspiration there was something which, opposed to their raging fanaticism, looked like a silent reproach ; so they killed the illustrious singer. The inhabitants of Lesbos gave his head an honourable grave : Apollo blessed it, in consequence, with the gift of poetry—it was the birth-place of Arion and Sappho, of Alcæus and Terpander, who

invented the seven-stringed lyre—and with a beautiful and luxuriant nature into the bargain.

Samothrace is seen distant and dim; there was the seat of the ancient Orphic mysteries, for, in the youthful days of nations, their bards are endowed with other gifts than in the period of their manhood, or of their infirm age; they are seers, foretelling the future, prophets who strive to prepare men for the days of the coming times, and infuse into their words more than the multitude comprehends. Whether many different points may not have been more generally misconceived than understood, is a question which I sometimes ask myself, when such an expounder of Dante or Shakspeare falls into my hands.

And again it was night, and when morning came, we had been lying at anchor for some hours in the harbour of Smyrna, and I went upon deck in high expectation. My first words were, "How like the coast of Spain, about Alicante and Carthagen!" and so it really is. The same sharp, bare, reddish yellow hills, which, destitute of trees and shade, rise flush from the shore, out of which the sea has scooped a spacious gulph. Smyrna itself, however, is a considerable commercial city, such as the south of Spain cannot match, where more than one hundred thousand human beings lead an easy life, and many become wealthy, and where a sort of European society is formed by the families of the consuls of all nations. The Franks' quarter, next to the sea,

which first strikes the eye, and in which, of course, the hotels are situated, has a tolerably European aspect, and I imagined that, with Constantinople, I had taken leave of uncleanness, till a walk through this city taught me that I was mistaken. For the rest, its situation is by no means striking, and least of all when you come from the green shores of the Bosphorus.

I am now in Ionia, on that wonderfully favoured soil, where the fairest blossoms of Grecian and Christian civilization were developed: and, singularly enough, this soil does not interest me so strongly as such places generally do. But I know why. Ionia formed no distinct whole, like the more fortunate little Greek republics. From them it borrowed its civilization, its language; to them it gave up its great men, its thinkers, philosophers, poets, and artists, Hesiod and Herodotus, Thales and Pythagoras, Homer and Anacreon, Parrhasius, Zeuxis, and Apelles. All this we comprehend under Grecian civilization, and its blossoms, such as Athens and Corinth, are blended for us with the idea of their nursery, which Ionia in a great measure was.

Subsequently, in the earliest times of Christianity it found here a home, where it flourished in vigour and purity, as it was founded by the apostles; and the most ardent of them all, the most active, and perhaps the one who best understood how to propagate it most effectively, Paul, was a native of Asia

Minor, of Tarsus in Cilicia. From Patmos the favourite disciple of Christ, John, wrote to the seven churches of Lesser Asia the seven letters which form an introduction to the Apocalypse, and are addressed to Ephesus, Laodicea, Sardis, Thyatira, Philadelphia, Pergamus, and Smyrna. The last of them receives this cheering exhortation: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." It is indeed a flourishing and opulent life that has established itself around Smyrna, and imparts to it greater prosperity and splendour than these half annihilated regions are acquainted with; but the "crown of life" is a promise, which, under the dominion of Islamism, has not yet found the time of its fulfilment.

Of the other six congregations, not one, it is said, is so considerable and in such a flourishing state as Smyrna: some of them are insignificant places, others no longer exist; for instance, of Ephesus nothing is left but scanty ruins, and yet it possessed one of the wonders of the ancient world, the temple of Diana. All is now dust and ashes. The temple has disappeared, and the congregation to which John wrote, "I have this against thee that thou forsakest thy first love," is dispersed. Turcomans and Ottomans have dwelt there; and on this spot the Mongols under Timour pitched their tents for more than thirty years. It then fell under the Turkish yoke, and now it is an unwholesome swamp, where malignant fevers prevail at this

season of the year. Such is the end of the ancient, universally renowned, magnificent Ephesus.

For the rest, those Christian churches cannot long have preserved themselves in their original purity, for the apostolic energy and simplicity seem to have subsisted only till Constantine embraced the Christian religion, and thus clothed it, in a manner, in the temporal purple, which is not destined for it ; for its Founder expressly says, "My kingdom is not of this world." So early as the fourth century, when they had scarcely recovered from the persecutions and tortures inflicted on them by the Roman emperors, the Christians began to fall out among themselves, to abuse vulgarly, to hate bitterly, and furiously to persecute one another ; and all on account of the different interpretation given by certain speculative and mystical teachers who arose among them, not only to the words and doctrines of Christ, but also to his appearance itself ; so that the Christians split by degrees into I know not how many sects : Arians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Monophysites, and numberless others, many of which still exist in the East.

The Councils, at which these lamentable disputes were not so much adjusted as suppressed by some arbitrary decision of the majority or of one influential leader, were most of them also held in this same Ionia ; such as those of Nicæa, of Ephesus, of Chalcedon : and they always came to the conclusion to draw a limit there where the Founder of our religion

has placed *none*—namely, to faith ; for he says, expressly and simply, “ Blessed are they that believe ;” not they who believe this or that. It is incalculable what mischief theology has done to religion. What a mistake to suppose that reason is detrimental to it ! O no ! the sublimest understanding will bow most profoundly before it. But that quackery which is practised with the understanding, the acumen of speculation, the subtilties of erudition, the sophistries of doubt—these are excessively detrimental to it, even to the present day, because man has the lamentable propensity to place himself above what he has learned. Hence some think that they can dispense with the divine precepts, because this or the other dogma appears to them untenable ; while others entrench themselves behind the authority of those councils, to preserve intact that which they secretly fear they shall not be able successfully to defend. And to such prejudiced teachers man is sent in quest of the truth ! Whoever does not descend into the depths of his own soul, whoever does not look his own spirit sincerely and stedfastly in the face, whoever does not feel the urgent necessity of longing, inquiring, searching after knowledge himself—he is badly off in these our days.

I sometimes figure to myself a man who has the purest, the noblest faith that can find entrance into a soul—the faith in those blessings which Christ enumerates in his Sermon on the Mount, who seeks them, who aspires to them, who strives to attain

them and them alone—for this I call real faith, to live and move, to breathe and exist for knowledge and in it—what a perfect man he must be, and how happy in his perfection! And then I ask myself, whether it can contribute the value of a straw to his perfectibility, or to the increase of his happiness, whether he is of opinion that Christ existed before the creation of the world, or not till afterwards; or that Christ had *only* a divine nature, or only a human nature, or both natures blended into one—and then I can do no other, than, with the deepest sincerity, answer, No! Is, then, such an opinion altogether a faith?—does it penetrate with ennobling power into the human essence?—does it impart strength for overcoming afflictions?—does it give courage for the combat with never-ceasing temptation?—does it give buoyancy, confidence, will, any thing that breathes the breath of life?—does it not stand aside, like some distinguished stranger, whom you dare not invite to your table, but by whose presence you feel in some degree honoured? But my faith is my bosom friend, who sits down with me by my hearth, even when it is cold—at my table even when it is empty—and helps me out of all tribulations; and a single word of Christ's has in it more of that vivifying energy than the decrees of all the councils of Asia Minor, which were incapable of devising a maxim to be compared with this, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

And so it is not cheering or elevating thoughts



that meet me when I go back to the history of Ionia. I must penetrate into profound antiquity, in order to forget all the verbal and scholastic squabbles ; and, on a journey to Palestine, the Christian past lies nearer to the heart than any other. A visit to the Seven Churches, by the by, is much in fashion, especially with the English. Into my plan it never entered. I want to visit Palestine, to tread that soil upon which the word of God fell like seed from heaven. What the hand of man has made of it I see sufficiently round about me in our world ; that is, deserts and ruins greater than those of Ephesus.

My dearest mother, it will not be particularly amusing to you to be told by your daughter that she is going to loggerheads with the Councils ; so I will rather tell you about a ride we took yesterday, after I had got rid, by means of breakfast and dressing, of the last relics of the *désagréments* of the steamer. In summer the wealthy Frank population are distributed among three villages near Smyrna—Burnabad, Budsha, and Sedikoi. They have country-houses, gardens, trees, and a rich vegetation, which the city itself has not. Burnabad, we were told, was the finest, and we rode away for it on quiet, but not the most docile of asses. As I cannot ride astride like the Turkish women, I sat aside, with the right foot in the stirrup, upon my broad saddle, which certainly was not very convenient. Still, I managed extremely well, and we proceeded for two hours through the plain, parched, I might say

pulverized, by the intense heat of the sun, and diversified only by shadeless olive trees, and dry beds of rivulets; for here it is still the height of summer, though that season has already lasted for five months.

Burnabad is not seated upon the sea, nor has the place any immediate view of it. Each individual villa, with its garden, is surrounded by a high white wall, so that it looks hot and confined outside, but very pleasant within—only on a very, very small scale, somewhat like a parterre of flowers in comparison with what we call a garden. You may sit there on a shady spot, and enjoy the sight of clumps of pomegranate and citron trees; but as for walking on those narrow paths, paved with small stones or shells, to prevent dust, that is indeed extremely unpleasant.

The dragoman first took us to the house of a wealthy Greek merchant, the mistress of which received us most hospitably, and conducted us into her cool, handsome saloon, and then into her hot garden. The prospect from the peristyle, over the high flight of steps outside the saloon, was the only pleasing one that I found at Burnabad; over the cypresses in the garden and between the hot red sides of the hills, we had a cooling and refreshing view of the ever incomparably beautiful sea in the distance. The saloon was furnished quite in the European style: the daughter of the house seated herself at the pianoforte, and played *Casta Diva*.

We were told that Smyrna had in winter an Italian Opera; it was exactly like the coasts of Italy, or Spain, and the extraordinary civility towards strangers reminded us agreeably of Andalusia. Treated with coffee, confectionary, and fresh water, according to the Oriental custom, two minutes after our arrival, and presented with flowers, we departed in about half an hour from this hospitable house. For one of us, brought up in our ceremonious Europe, and in society where not a creature speaks to another till he is at least acquainted with your name, and would rather know your condition, family, pedigree, it is inexpressibly, strangely agreeable to be received as though you were an expected guest. I cannot recollect where this text of Holy Scripture stands, "Be hospitable, for ye know not but that ye are entertaining an angel." But this law still prevails throughout the East, and even here in the Levant, as we are accustomed to call the commercial Frank establishments in these parts.

An Englishman's villa was on a larger scale than that Greek one, but had not the refreshing sea-view; and when we reached home about five o'clock, I was not very curious about Budsha and Sedikoi. On our return, at what is called the Caravan Bridge, we met with long trains of camels, going into the interior of the country. They all stride along slowly and gently, one after another, and will not follow any other leader but an ass, which, with a bell about his neck, opens the march. The tanned faces of

the drivers, who either rode upon or walked by the side of them, had much sharper, more marked features, than the inexpressive physiognomy of the Turks. At a large ancient well by the road, the ugly, temperate beasts were watered, and each waited patiently till it came to his turn. If you meet such a loaded train in the extremely narrow streets of Smyrna, you are obliged either to turn back, or to step into a house, for there is no room to get out of the way.

Towards five o'clock it had become delightfully cool, and in the Frank town there were all the extremely handsome Smyrniote women standing chatting neighbourly together, or sitting *en famille* in the hall of their dwellings, with the house-doors open. Yes, they are indeed exquisitely beautiful, with splendid, large, dark, animated eyes, and fine regular features, instinct with mind and life. You need but look at them to comprehend the ancient Ionian beauty. Add to this, they wear a handkerchief wound most gracefully about the braids of their dark hair, sometimes of silk, sometimes of white muslin, with flowers of different colours embroidered at the corners. Oh! what a lovely thing is beauty! I get nothing by it if I see the fair Smyrniote women chatting before their doors in the cool of the evening; but it puts me into a good humour.

There is another beauty of Smyrna, by which I

do get something, for I eat it—I mean grapes—grapes such as you have no conception of in Germany, so large, so juicy, so fiery, in short, the very ideal of grapes. The fig-season is gone by, to my great regret. For figs I have an unfortunate passion, and I cannot gratify it in Germany; here their time is unluckily past. The famous dried ones are prepared in a most disgusting manner: people spit on their hands, then squeeze the figs flat between them, and pack them close in hogsheads, so that they stick together. Till they come to Europe, they are in the state in which we are fond of eating them.

The society of Smyrna is, as I have observed, making its *villeggiatura*, and, in consequence, I met with none of the consuls for whom I had letters: but they came to town very early this morning. The Danish consul related to me that, when a very young man, nearly forty years ago, he had become acquainted in Holstein. I know not through whom, with an old gentleman, who had made a very extraordinary impression upon him by his talents, his rare attainments, and his fondness for astronomy: he added that he was a Herr von Hahn and asked whether I might perhaps be related to him. I said, quite delighted, that he was my grandfather; and he rejoiced to bid his grand-daughter welcome here. It was indeed remarkable to find, after the lapse of so many years, the name of my

grandfather held in such honour here, on the coast of the Ionian Sea, by a person who was an utter stranger to me.

In the family of the Dutch consul, that post has been in a manner hereditary for more than a hundred years. I am very fond of hereditary succession: it imparts a certain repose which that which has been acquired does not give; it awakens not the vain ambition of attaining this or the other, but that noble one which goes hand in hand with the certainty of attainment—to perform one's duty to the best of one's power. It may make a man proud, never vain. For that reason I like it.

On another day, we took a long walk through the city, and up the hill where lie the enormous ruins of the ancient castle, which formerly commanded the city, and in the time of the Romans was a very splendid building, but of which nothing is now left but some pieces of wall and an incredible quantity of rubbish. There you overlook all Smyrna, the Turks' quarter, situated on the slope of the hill, quite apart from the Franks' quarter, like a distinct town: the plain, looking like a leopard's skin, yellowish with dark spots—these are gardens and cultivated fields; and then the sea, bordered by lofty hills, which, however, form no defence against the storm that ruffles it. It was too tempestuous to stay long on the top. A flock of sheep stood timidly crowded close together among the ruins, not daring to venture in quest of the scanty herbage, and the

armed shepherd could not do anything for their protection. We absolutely flew down hill, and I afterwards regretted exceedingly that I could not fly also out of the endless filth of the Jews' quarter.

We had first been in some houses in the Franks' town, which looked very inviting. The hall is always as wide as the house-door, and of the depth of the whole house, having no door at the farther end, so that you step through a verandah of vines or rose-trees into a small garden, which though, it is true, but a few yards broad, is neat and fragrant, and is generally decorated in the back ground with a small fountain. How delightful it looks, when you peep in at the open door, to perceive the quiet enticing little garden, especially when a handsome woman is seated in the cool chiaro-scuro of the hall!——But I must abruptly throw down my pen, and on board. Adieu! adieu!

## LETTER XVIII.

## TO MY SISTER.

Departure from Smyrna—Lydia—Company on board—Tchesnié—Chios—Erythrea—Small Islands—Rhodes and its ancient grandeur—The Knights of St. John—Cyprus and Larnaca.

Beyrout, October 6th. 1843.

God bless you, my Clara ! the voyage is got over, and, well and hearty, I have once more set on foot the dear, good, and marvellously beautiful land. The first thing I have to tell you is that the day before yesterday I drank your health, as was befitting your birthday, and that in the most celebrated wine in the world, in Cyprus wine, and at the Franciscan convent at Larnaca in Cyprus.

Ah ! it is like a dream, all that I have seen near and at a distance, and where I have been, during the last eight days. To mention merely the names of Chios, Patmos, Samos, Rhodes—does it not sound like an harmonious chord ? does it not make as agreeable an impression as if you were to take up a bouquet of fragrant roses of all colours ? Ah ! how beautiful is the world ! how great ! yet not so impenetrably extensive as you are apt to imagine, before you have taken a few right hearty steps in it. Here I am, sitting as quietly and in as good health at the foot of the Lebanon as under our lime-trees,



on the extreme coast of the Mediterranean, as on that of the Baltic. I have had to encounter no dangers during the long journey, no horrors have threatened me, not a finger has ached. To be sure, I have been sea-sick, but that is rather an incomprehensible defect in my constitution than a disease, and it is utterly impossible that the body should always feel well: therefore mine suffers when at sea. The moment I set but one foot on shore, I am quite well again. Sea-sickness, it is true, is excessively annoying; but yet we have had a magnificent voyage, when I look back at it and call every thing to mind.

Eight days ago to-day, I went on board at Smyrna, and yesterday morning, at sunrise, we came to an anchor here in the road. But we stopped a good deal by the way. At Smyrna, I met once more with Grillparzer, who came thither from the plain of Troy, but only for a moment, to take leave of him. I rejoice sincerely that I have one agreeable acquaintance more in Vienna, a city which I have always liked—for he is agreeable to me, like all those who, with great and shining talents, have remained upright and downright as God created them. This may be thought very little and very natural. Yes, it may be little enough; but alas! nothing is so rare as what is natural.

Our boat danced violently from the quay to the steamer, the *Lodovico*, and I saw plainly that we

should have a bad night. A black-blue stratus cloud stood like a wall in the west, and through it the setting sun here and there flung sparks, not rays. The hills too had wrapped themselves up closely in their own stony mantles. Nowhere those marvellous tints, that transparency of the air, that fine shading and blending of sharp-drawn lines with the ether, which impart such charms to a southern sky.

So did I take leave of the ancient luxurious Lydia, where Croesus once amassed his prodigious treasures, whither Cyrus extended the Persian dominion, where the sword of Alexander stretched the Persians in the dust, where the Macedonian general Antiochus, after the death of the hero-king, founded the kingdom of Syria, where that was put an end to by the Romans, and where the Romish Byzantine power, gradually abridged by Turcomans and Mougols, was crushed into the dust by the Ottomans. The Ottoman sultans continued to have a partiality for this country, long after they had gained possession of Constantinople, and adorned Magnesia, the ancient capital of Lydia, with the splendour of their presence and of their buildings.

But in this Turkish rule, as I have already told you, there is more of a destructive than a conservative principle, so that it sets up something for the moment, but cannot give it permanence. Its sceptre is like the wand of a malignant fairy, and, without evil design, it injures wherever it falls. The countries governed by it are drained, the sources of

life dried up. In men, in productions of the land, in wealth, they produce not one-tenth of what they produced in other times ; air and soil are deteriorated, for in them are pernicious elements, which immediately gain the ascendancy, when not counteracted by man, with his energy, his care, his incessant attention. No overpowering foe, no ravaging conqueror has, during the Turkish sway, pitched his tents here ; and yet these countries are desolated as if by ruthless enemies. Earthquakes, it is true, have been frightfully busy in doing their share, and they are a power which paralyzes the hand of man, as they keep himself in perpetual apprehension and alarm. But if so besotted a despotism were not the real genius of the Sublime Porte ; if there were any one who studied to amend, to improve, to advance ; if the pashalik were not to be totally drained, that the tribute may be paid and the officials may amass wealth ; some one or other would hit upon the idea, that there are other things to try and to introduce here than the European uniform for soldiers, and their European exercises and manœuvres—all which things contribute not in the least to render them warlike and brave. Where agriculture and commerce are not pursued, protected, and encouraged, the State is destitute of the right as well as of the left hand, of that which receives as well as of that which gives ; for all other sources and resources become exhausted in time.

This country, however, is not entirely without

manufactures. At Brusa are woven very handsome stuffs of silk and cotton, many of them worked with gold, others watered and made to look like satin, which might even be worn in Europe, if we had not there stuffs entirely of silk at the same price. The celebrated Smyrna carpets are not manufactured in the city itself, but farther inland; and for durability and beauty they far surpass the best English—to say nothing of the French and Brussels. There were some on board the steamer, and among them a superb one belonging to a pasha, who came with us to this place.

The Lodovico had assembled, in its not too extensive space, an extremely diverse and numerous company, with which I gradually made acquaintance. So many different persons crowded together in so narrow a compass, I have not before met with, for, in my voyage down the Danube, on leaving Pesth, though the number of passengers was much greater, so great as to be absolutely impenetrable and consequently inaccessible, they were all Hungarians, and mostly tradespeople; but here all nations, all religions, all classes were huddled together: a Dervise and a Franciscan, a Wirtemberg parson and a Maronite ecclesiastic from the Lebanon, that Hassan Pasha and three peasants, German colonists from the Crimea, going to the valley of Jehoshaphat near Jerusalem, a French couple, who seem to be making a real pilgrimage to Palestine, for they mean to confine their visits exclusively to the holy places, and an

English couple going to spend their honeymoon in the deserts of Arabia ; then more English, Germans, and one Swede. I assure you, Clara, it was excessively amusing.

The ladies' cabin was a small, dark, incommodious den, with a single light and air-hole as big as your hand. Luckily, I had to share it with the English lady only, who like me, was accustomed to travelling, consequently prepared for inconveniences, and who also, like me, quietly retired to her berth, as soon as the vessel was in motion. There we remained quite still, though, in the forty hours' passage from Rhodes to Cyprus, it was a real punishment to stay below ; and we were rather angry with the Frenchwoman, who came three times a day to arrange her head-dress and her mantilla before the mirror in our cabin, complaining at the same time of her headache, and her cold, and her feverish state, and when she had finished her toilette, going to the saloon and making a hearty meal. This lady's husband was a person who was gradually shunned, like an evil being, by the whole ship's company. He always commenced his phrases with "*Le grand père de ma femme, le duc de . . . .*" or, "*Le cousin de ma femme, le marquis de . . . .*"; or he inquired the way that he ought to take to the cedars of Lebanon, a question which, being all strangers, like himself, we could none of us answer.

The pasha was a very troublesome fellow-passenger in a different way. In the very limited space left

upon deck for persons who had taken the first place, half a dozen of his squalid, ragged slaves were constantly standing, or running to and fro—pipe-fillers, pipe-bearers, pipe-bringers, and I know not what ragamuffins besides, whose bare legs terminated in tattered slippers, and whose elbows peeped through the rent coat-sleeves. If you had anything in your hand that attracted the pasha's notice, an opera-glass, for instance, or a telescope, he beckoned to one of his slaves, and the slave instantly took the opera-glass, or whatever it might be, out of the hand of the owner, and delivered it to his master. He examined it, tried it, and when he was tired of it, he gave it back to the slave and the latter to the owner. Some chose to consider this behaviour simple, childlike, engaging; for my part, I could only think it rude, for he conducted himself as if he had been lord and master of the vessel; and his stupid slaves once obliged the English lady to rise from her seat, that they might spread his carpet on the spot in the shade. One of his people having struck the engineer, the captain, a very forbearing man, this time demanded satisfaction, threatening that he would otherwise turn out the slave upon the first rock they came to; for such treatment could not be endured. This the pasha comprehended. He called the offender to him, made him fall on his knees by his carpet, pulled him down by the head, and chastised him with his hand and afterwards with his slipper, in the way that people chastise

children. He was then about to belabour him with the telescope, when the dervise ran up and dragged away the slave, roaring and blubbering like an ill-bred boy, and the pasha again took up his *tchibook*. I cannot express how coarse and brutal this whole proceeding was; and I should not have mentioned it at all, but that it serves for an illustration of Turkish manners.

The history of the three Swabian peasants, who never stirred from their place upon deck during the whole passage, is very extraordinary. They emigrated, as great numbers of the Wirtembergers do, about twenty-five years ago, with others of their countrymen, to Southern Russia, where they settled under the protection of the government, where they cultivated an excellent, highly productive soil, had no more taxes than eighteen *kreutzer* per man to pay, and felt quite contented. Their colony increased to several hundred souls. They are Protestants. Now it appears that religious dissensions have broken out among them, and given rise to separatists. These have taken it into their heads that the time of the fulfilment of one of the apocalyptic predictions is at hand; that Christ is about to appear again upon earth, to govern the world for a thousand years, in peace and happiness; and that he will graciously gather his own people closely around him in the valley of Jehoshaphat: and so they, his faithful flock, must needs remove thither and await his coming.

Accordingly, they were for breaking up all at once, and departing. They did, however, listen to the rational representations made on the part of the Russian government, advising them, before they set out with wives and children for the valley of Jehoshaphat, that is, before they blindly plunged themselves into misery, they should send three deputies to Constantinople, and thence to Palestine, to convince themselves on the spot, and with the authorisation of the Turkish government, of the feasibility of their design; and those peasants in the Swabian doublet, with the broad-brimmed Black Forest hat, and the broad German brogue, were those very three deputies. The brother of the Wirtemberg parson had gained their confidence, and to him they related what I here repeat to you. When he inquired how they were led to suppose that Christ is about to appear on earth, they replied that some of them had been told so by their *hearts*.

And on this chimerical notion of ignorant, hot-brained enthusiasts, a whole congregation was ready to sacrifice its present tranquil, prosperous state for an ideal future. To what a height must stupid fanaticism have arrived to render this possible! and how weak must these people have been to be led into such folly! But what I should like to know is, whether people whose hearts tell them things so destructive to the welfare of others, ought not to be sent to the mad-house on the part of the government.



In the middle ages, at various times, ideas of the millennium, and likewise of the end of the world filled all heads. People have always chosen to represent this as a speculation of the Catholic Church, which sought by the propagation of such ideas to gain dominion over souls, and occasionally over purses. Now, many centuries later, in our enlightened age, Protestants do the same thing.

I conversed most with the Franciscan, Father Jean Battista, of the convent of San Salvador, at Jerusalem, who had been to Paris and Constantinople, on business of his Order, and was accompanying the French couple from Rome on their pilgrimage—which did not seem always to amuse him. For, in spite of his coarse cowl, his sandals, and his cord-girdle, Father Jean Battista is a man who, like any other child of this world, had rather be amused than annoyed. He is thirty-six years old, and entered the Order at sixteen. In his birth-place, Genoa, this early entrance is allowed, but not in the Ecclesiastical States and Tuscany, till twenty-four. I said, "Who knows what life is at sixteen, and who can renounce that which he knows nothing about?" He replied, "One knows it, and knows well what one is doing;" but I believe such cases must be exceptions. He is a handsome man, with an intelligent, good-humoured eye, and a sarcastic mouth.

He told me a great deal about the concerns of his Order in the East, which interested me much. After

the disastrous termination of the Crusades, the holy sepulchre, like the whole of Palestine, fell into the hands of the Mohamedans; the convents were destroyed, the monks and ecclesiastics expelled, and the pilgrims, when there were any, were without succour, either for soul or body. St. Francis then solicited of the pope at Rome, in behalf of his recently founded Order, permission to go to Palestine, and to render assistance in every possible way to the pilgrims, as well as to the Christians settled there—a permission which he obtained in 1304, to the exclusion of all other Orders, excepting the Carmelites, and which was then equivalent to martyrdom, or at least an extremely dangerous mission.

The Franciscans commenced their work with that indefatigable perseverance, which distinguishes the Catholic church in all its enterprizes, and in which it employs regular clergy, when interests extending into futurity are involved; because these continue steadily within the sphere of the monastic spirit and cannot act out of it, for they would then be nothing more than a dead member of a living body. The convents of the Terra Santa, the general designation given to them, are spread from Constantinople to Damascus, and to Fayoum on the borders of Upper Egypt. They are all under that of San Salvador, at Jerusalem, and are generally recruited from that house; but, of course, under the direction of the general of the Franciscans, who resides at

Rome, along with the other generals of Orders. They are partly lodging-houses for all pilgrims, without distinction of person or confession; partly schools for Christian children, partly guardians of the holy places, sometimes all these at once, and at all times a centre and rendezvous for the Catholic congregations. Missionaries they are not: this occupation would be a useless one among the professors of Islamism.

This reminds me that I made acquaintance in Constantinople with an American missionary, that is to say, a German, in the service of the American mission, which is of the Scottish or Presbyterian confession. It is said that there are many of them there, and that their operations are directed to the Jews, whether successfully or no, I have not heard.

But to return to the convents of the Terra Santa—they are all under the protection of the *Most Christian* king, namely the French king. Is not this an anomaly? France, which has suppressed all the convents in its territories, which even abolished for a time the Christian religion itself, has still continued, ever since the days of St. Louis, protector of all the convents in the East. For the rest, they have suffered severely from the revolutions in France and Spain during the last fifty years, for they are supported entirely by voluntary contributions and alms. The Greek Church, with its convents, has thriven in the like proportion, probably favoured by the powerful protection of Russia; and so has the Armenian,

which has on its side the great wealth of its confessors, mostly bankers, commercial men, merchants, and the highest financial officers of the Turkish empire. Every firman authorizing any act connected with religious matters, the erection of a school, the repair of a church, must be purchased, and at as dear a rate as possible: and, as the Armenians are opulent, they always have firmans at their command. These three confessions are the predominant in the Levant.

The Catholic Church regards the Greeks as schismatics, on account of their separation from the papal chair; but the Armenians as heretics, because they follow other dogmas, and are Monophysites; that is, they believe in a divine nature only in Christ. If you ask how this is to be understood, I must repeat what I recently wrote to one of you—these dogmas are not to be understood at all, but may be argued about for ever. The Council of Chalcedon, however, declared itself, A.D. 451-453, in favour of a two-fold nature in Christ, and thereby the separation was consummated. The Greek schism took place later, in the year 858; and the last attempt to effect a reunion was made at the Council of Florence in 1439, but in vain. Here in Syria, the Maronites form a considerable sect of the Catholic Church. The ritual is said to be different, and the clergy are allowed to marry. When I expressed my surprise at this, the Padre replied: “*L’église tolère tout ce qui n’attaque pas la foi.*” And this is at bottom equally wise and

fitting, as it ought to have only a spiritual authority, and at the same time it retains the power to uphold the principle.

It was not the Padre who told me all this that I have been relating to you, still less about the enmity in which those three churches live with one another in Palestine. I had already heard a great deal on this subject at Constantinople, and avoided all conversation that was likely to take this turn, for fear of conceiving too strong a disgust at the state of Christianity in Jerusalem, and arriving there filled with prejudice. We once got in conversation upon the subject of the great dispute between the Jesuits and the Jansenists, which, in the time of Louis XIV., set half France by the ears, and originated in the question, whether it is divine grace or free will that operates in man. Now, I am entirely for grace, because I have learned from myself how limited free will is. When the Padre asked whether this was a Protestant notion, I was really ashamed to be obliged to confess that I was utterly ignorant what the Protestant Church teaches on that head; but, when he said that one must not ponder too much over such matters, I could not help smiling, for I knew full well that the pope at that time issued a bull against the Jansenists and their doctrine of grace; because, if divine grace were the only operating power in the human soul, the Church would lose all dominion over souls.

You will ask with surprise how I could find time

for these various discussions, as I was during the whole time in the small cabin with the English lady. After we had left Smyrna, at six o'clock on Friday evening, and had been going all night, we lay at anchor twenty four hours in the bay of Tchesmé, opposite to the island of Chios, after the captain had made an abortive attempt to put to sea again. The wind was so high and so directly contrary, that the ship could scarcely move from the spot, so that he was afraid lest his stock of coals should be consumed before he reached Rhodes. In the memorable bay of Tchesmé, I made these different acquaintances, and had time to survey the scenery and the environs into the bargain. Here, on the 5th of July 1770, the Turkish navy received the death-blow, from which it has never since recovered, when the united Russian and English fleet, under Orloff and Elphinston, blew it up by means of fire ships.

The insignificant little town of Tchesmé is seated between the shore and bare cloven hills; but opposite to its bay lies the charming island of Chios, adorned in the morning light with silver hills, at noon tinged gold yellow, and in the evening crimson; the outlines of which, at once soft and well-defined, are absolutely of Ionian beauty. Like an exquisite flower, or a superb shell, the enchanting island floated upon the waves, and with a telescope I saw the houses and gardens. Twenty years ago, during the insurrection of the Greeks against the Porte, the Turks perpetrated here cruelties and butcheries, the

traces of which are said to be not yet effaced ; but at such a distance you see nothing but the beauty which God has given it—as, at the sight of a lovely face, one cannot instantly detect the sorrows that are preying upon the heart.

The ruins of Erythræa are situated inland, beyond the hills of Tchesmé. In the remotest antiquity this was the home of the Sibyl, who shared with the Persian, the Samian, and the Cumæan, the reputation of the greatest wisdom and the profoundest insight into futurity. Longing after a better futurity—that is a family trait stamped upon the human race ever since its origin. Nations have the most diverse deities, laws, manners : they understand not each others language ; in their efforts they stand in hostile opposition ; and one epoch after another rolls away, unheeding or condemning—but, in the one indelible trait, they are, from one thousand years to another, all, all brothers ; and this longing, expressed by a sigh, a cry of terror, or a complaint, resounds like a long echo into eternity. Individual men, endowed with souls divinely great, went to meet this longing, and gave it that which takes away its sting but not its impulsion—an aim, and the belief in that aim. Do you imagine that the ancient priests, in the temples of Memphis and the grove of Dodona, were wretched impostors—that the sibyls and prophets were extravagant enthusiasts ? Oh be assured that they were acquainted with that want of human nature, which demands something more than bread and labour, and will not be denied ;

and therefore they were its greatest benefactors, greater than those who gave them spinning-jennies, beet-root sugar, or steam-engines: they gave them the belief in their own eternal perfectibility. To live and to strive in this spirit, after this aim—that is what gives the joys of Olympus, or the felicities of the Elysian fields, or everlasting happiness, or the kingdom of God; for who can speak in any other than his own language?

To have awakened this aspiration is putting a strong pilgrim's staff into the hand of the weary wanderer and giving him a flask of water; with these let him seek his home. Only false prophets, the blind fanatics, such as all ages have produced along with these seers, they only say to him, Now thou hast attained it. Christ taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come!"—but the Separatists sent out those poor peasants to the valley of Jehoshaphat, because the millennium is to commence immediately!

Now, my dear Clara, I had abundance of time to meditate on all this; for, at half past six in the morning of Sunday, the 1st of October, we again ventured out of the bay of Tchesmé, and did not return to it, though the sea still ran very high. I was extremely reluctant to go back to the dull cabin, wished most particularly to see Patmos and the other beautiful islands, and therefore attempted, like the pasha, to establish myself on deck; but his slaves made me almost nervous with impatience, trampling incessantly upon my feet, and emptying his pipe



close to me. I retired, in consequence, to the cabin, and there I staid till we reached Rhodes on Monday morning.

So I saw nothing of Samos, where Pythagoras was born, who taught his disciples never to salute the rising sun otherwise than with hymns, as a messenger of light. Neither did I see Patmos, where John the Evangelist found a retreat during his banishment, and which we passed so close, that the Greek convent on one of its hills was distinctly perceived—nor Cos, the birth-place of Apelles, whose name, as an object of veneration, is transmitted traditionally from one family of painters to another, on no better authority than the admiration of the ancients, for not a stroke of his pencil has descended to later times—nor, on the continent, the rocks of Cnidos, near which lie the ruins of the town that produced Praxiteles, and has given its name to his statue of Venus. A year ago, I saw one in the Glyptothek at Munich, which bore the name of Venus of Cnidos. Which is the genuine? But how poor in every thing like art and cultivation are now these places, and how rich the West deems itself in the possession of a few of their crumbs!

A dark blue cloudless sky overspread Rhodes when, in the morning of the 2nd of October, we hurried upon deck, to see as soon as possible the ancient far-famed island which bore one of the wonders of the world. Rhodos, in Greek, is the rose, and Rhode was the name of the lovely daughter of Aphro-

dite, whom Phæbus here beheld on Mount Atabyris and gave her his love: so says the tradition which consecrated the island as the favourite resort of the sun-god. His statue it was which, cast in brass, eighty ells in height, and set up over the harbour, to do honour and return thanks to him, after Demetrius, "the destroyer of towns" had, in the year 282 before Christ, besieged Rhodes, but not taken it. Earthquakes, from which these delightful regions suffer so severely, threw down this wonder of the world; and in 672, when the Arabs conquered the island, its fragments are said to have loaded nine hundred camels.

The town rises amphitheatrically upon the shore, and terminates in an extensive well cultivated plain. Its walls and bastions give it a fortified appearance, and single palms wave like flags of peace over the chivalrous warrior, who, in full armour, seems to lie here upon his bier. The Atabyris overlooks the whole island, which was enveloped by the hot sun in a roscate glow. It looked most magnificently. Could the sun's rays have melted the brass, which the aboriginal inhabitants of the island, the Telchines, understood the art of working with such enchanting ingenuity, that their images exercised an irresistible power over the soul of the spectator? O no! no! the sun's rays had nothing to do with the matter, and those ancient masters pronounced no magical incantations over their productions; their magic was their genius. Would to God that we had now artists of whom we

might say, they pronounce incantations over their works, so irresistibly do they seize upon the soul !

Rhodes has had two great, glorious and brilliant epochs : the Hellenic, when it was a city of the arts, its public places adorned with three thousand statues, and its halls with the productions of Zeuxis and Apelles; the Christian, when the cross of the Knights of St. John waved from its pinnacles. Of the former nothing remains ; of the latter, everything but that banner.

The Christian nations of the middle ages had long, not so much given up, as forgotten their solicitude to gain possession of the holy sepulchre ; the Christian sovereigns had long confined themselves to the defence, not of the Holy Land, but of their own dominions, against the Turks. But there still existed a little tribe, which, though a hundred times worsted, yet continued with unconquerable perseverance to oppose the Turks : a tribe which, without country, without hearth or home, without wife or child, without anything that the material man of our days deems necessary for living, yet lived, and lived gloriously : for it lived for an unselfish idea. A whole tribe ? do you ask ? Yes, a whole tribe of men constantly recruited out of the best blood of the West—the Knights of St. John. To the vows of monasticism they added the vow of chivalry—to combat without rest or peace for the right. They defended the rights of God upon earth, his altars, his churches, his congregations, his

unprotected and helpless, his poor and sick. Never did Order spring from a purer, a nobler motive. Hence, there appears to me to be a prodigious difference between such an Order and modern societies, associations, or by whatever name they may be called. In the former, the individual was obliged to give up *himself*, wholly and entirely, without exception or reservation; to do nothing for himself—all for the whole; in the latter, a man gives his money, or his vote, or a day in the week, or something else, without relinquishing any of his personal connexions, any of his spiritual or temporal interests. It is perfectly natural that the one should be capable of accomplishing extraordinary things, if he pursues commendable objects; for the latter it is inexpressibly difficult.

Now, it was certainly something extraordinary that the Knights of St. John should, for above three hundred years from their institution, live for the same idea that had given birth to them. The Templars had perished so early as the commencement of the fourteenth century by the Scylla and Charybdis of all human works—their own arrogance and the envy of others. The Teutonic Knights, who carried on their crusades in the north of Europe against the Prussian heathen, and who combined with the suspicious zeal for conversion, a still more suspicious zeal for conquest, founded a distinct State, which soon became an entirely temporal sovereignty. The Knights of St. John alone never ceased to contest

with the Turks every foot of their existence ; and, driven from all the points which they occupied in the vicinity of the Holy Land, they conquered for themselves, in 1411, under their grand-master, Foulques de Villaret, the island of Rhodes, expelling the Turks, and establishing themselves there. In 1440, they repulsed the sultan of Egypt, by whom they were besieged, and, in 1480, the still more dangerous attack of the fleet of sultan Mohamed II. In 1522, their last hour arrived. On Christmas-day, after a siege of six months, conducted by sultan Suleiman the Great in person, the grand-master, Villiers de l'Isle Adam, was compelled to surrender the city. Six hundred knights, and five thousand fighting men, and the inhabitants of the city, women and children included, had defended themselves like lions, from St. John's day to the 20th of December, against Suleiman's army, one hundred thousand strong. Want of everything, of provisions as well as means of defence, forced them to surrender, and on New Year's day, 1523, the surviving knights left the fair island, and settled in Malta, which Charles V. gave to them. The Turk entered—the jackal took possession of the abode of the lion.

This impression the city made upon me in the highest degree. As the knights left it, so the Turks established themselves in it, taking nothing away, and adding nothing, but according to their custom leaving to Time the work of ruin : and that destroys

more slowly than the busy hand of man. Gates, towers, walls, the church of St. John, the Strada dei Cavalieri, are entirely oriental. It makes one quite melancholy to pass through this street, and to see the elegant sculptures on door-posts and window-frames : here a piece of an exquisitely wrought frieze, below a roof that is tumbling in ; there a pillar transformed into a door-sill. In many of the windows are still the well-preserved window-crosses, such as with us are to be found only in the most ancient houses of old cities. In other windows, they are either broken out ; or walled up along with them so that the elegant stone garlands stand out in sharp relief from the whitewashed wall. Heaps of rubbish and filth are piled up around the houses. Some appear to be quite deserted, others half in ruin, like clothes which do not fit the wearer. The jackal must turn out ! the Turk must be off ! I said to myself over and over again ; and I bethought me of a king who should render all these marvellous islands free and happy, and raise them again to that flourishing state which they enjoyed in the olden time, when Samos, for example, under Polycrates, equipped a hundred vessels of war. Figure to yourself these ancient war-ships as small as you please, so much is certain, that at this day Samos cannot muster a hundred fishing-boats. But the great European powers would, I fear, not extend their protection to my "King of the Islands ;"—that would be unlucky for him. I cannot help thinking at the

same time of the King of Greece, whom they have now made a constitutional one also. For how long?

We strolled through the town in all directions; went through long vaulted passages, the former destination of which it is impossible to guess; gained admittance into St. John's church, which is now a mosque of desolate appearance, on the walls of which may be discerned half erased Christian sculpture; inspected the gates, above one of which, in a small niche, is the forgotten image of some saint—whether the Virgin Mary or St. John, I could not make out; ascended the embattled tower by the harbour, which commands a view of the island, and of the sea to a great distance, and got at last to the bazar. This is genuine Turkish, consequently very disagreeable; but Clara, I discovered there something that I had longed for in vain at Constantinople—figs, very small green figs, no bigger than our plums. The dragoman picked out about three dozen of the very best, and paid for them twenty paras, one silver groschen! [three half-pence English] and at last the seller said that we might take as many more as we pleased into the bargain. Every fig was like a tea-spoonful of fig-jam. The grapes seemed also to be very good, and the fruiterers had plenty of customers; for, to people just come from on board a ship, fresh fruit is particularly refreshing.

Highly delighted with my short visit to Rhodes, we returned about two o'clock to our Lodovico, and

started again with a very high but favourable wind, so that, during the forty hours' passage to Cyprus, the sails were not unfurled. My English lady and I never stirred out of our cabin. You may conceive how glad we were when, at sunrise on the 4th, we were told that Cyprus was in sight. By nine o'clock we were lying at anchor in the road of Larnaca, on the south-east coast.

As Rhodes was dedicated to Apollo, and Samos to Juno, who passed her childhood there, so Cyprus was the island of Venus. The goddess was worshipped in the temples of Paphos, and Amathus gave her one of her names ; for to this coast she was borne by the waves, when they had given birth to this pearl of peerless beauty. The charm which we are apt to attach in imagination to the favourite haunts of Venus has vanished with her temples and her groves. The island is composed of a white chalky soil, on which the cactus flourishes, and the palm thrives. It produces completely the impression of the South : sky and sea so invariably blue, the ground so dazzlingly white, that the eye nearly closes to avoid the glare, unbroken by any shade.

We landed at La Scala. Such is the name given every where to the place of landing and embarkation, whether in the town itself, as at Constantinople, or forming a distinct place, as in Cyprus. We walked from it about half a league to Larnaca, here passing a palm of surprising beauty, there walls, which in the time of the Venetians may have formed a watch-



tower, and there an earthen hovel, which looks like a square chest, and the court-yard of which is enclosed with a cactus hedge. Slowly, like moving buildings, laden camels are seen passing over a range of inland hills, and their ungainly figures look really deformed, as they march by an elegant palm tree.

At Larnaca there is a Greek and a Latin convent ; by this ancient Byzantine appellation, all the Catholic convents in these parts are designated. We went to the latter, because a new church is building there, and found in it Franciscans of the Terra Santa, who were just then celebrating the festival of the patron and founder of their Order, by a dinner to which all the consuls were invited. In the fore-court, they treated us hospitably to wine, biscuits, and cold water, and the venerable father-warden made excuses for not inviting the whole party, saying that the rules of the Order were rigidly enforced there, and signifying *Ma non le donne*.

The 4th of October is St. Francis's day, and your birth-day, my Clara ; so that is the way in which you came by the libation of Cyprus wine. The old conventual church is a small, dark, cellar-like chapel ; the new one, built of fine white stone, furnished by the country will be lighter, more cheerful, and of better proportions : a father of the convent is the architect.

We afterwards sat for a considerable time in a coffee-house at La Scala, drinking lemonade and coffee, and the gentlemen playing at billiards.

Many inquisitive persons came to see the strangers, and among the rest a man dressed in the European style, who, when he heard German spoken, acknowledged himself to be at least a half-German. He was a native of Russian Lithuania, assisted in 1831 to revolutionize, and, after all sorts of adventures, including a wife picked up in Spain, had become army-surgeon in Cyprus. Is it not most amusing to revolutionize against the Russian government, and then put one's-self under the Turkish? He highly praised the easy, comfortable life which he led among the excellent Turks. We asked about this and that, and at length it came out, that such a person is well paid, has slaves of both sexes, cares for nobody, need do little and know less, and if he should chance to have any misunderstanding or difference of opinion with a superior officer, or with any Turk whatever, he must admit in words that the latter is right, always right—then he may quietly do just what he pleases behind his back: an easy life truly! We wished that he might long continue to enjoy his good fortune, and returned at four o'clock on board—for the last time, for we arrived here yesterday morning at half past six.

I am sorry that we landed precisely on this most uninteresting point in Cyprus. In the interior of the island, there are said to be fine and nearly unknown ruins of antiquity, and at Famagusta, we should probably have met with vestiges of the Venetian sway, as we found of the Knights of St. John in

Rhodes. After the Crusades, Cyprus was the last fraction of the kingdom of Jerusalem left to the Crusaders; and the kings of the house of Lusignan set up their throne in the land of Venusa, after they had lost it in the Holy Land. Through "The Daughter of the Republic," a title conferring equality of rank with kings—through Catherine Cornaro, widow and mother of the last Lusignans, Cyprus came into the possession of Venice, and flourished, blest and overflowing in population and zechins, as were all these parts, before they fell under Turkish despotism, and were subjected to that blood-sucking, life-draining institution, called Pashalik.

You are, perhaps, surprised that I should find leisure here for such an immense letter. My dear Clara, the heat here is so oppressive, at least, for us foreigners, and in M. Battista's very uncomfortable hotel, that one cannot leave the room till towards sunset, and is obliged to pass the day as immoveable and lightly dressed as possible. I have, therefore, plenty of time, and am glad that I could describe the voyage so circumstantially, for it was highly interesting, and so much the more deserving of a long recapitulation, as my stay was but transient as a pilgrim's at the points where we halted.

## LETTER XIX.

TO MY MOTHER.

Arrival at Beyrout—The Lebanon—Scenery—The Town—  
Houses—Provisions—Arabian Wedding.

Beyrout, October 8th, 1843.

EVERYTHING can be described, my dear mother—people, their way of living, their dress, their houses, their passions, their condition ; everything but the nature, the physiognomy, of a country. This one must set about geographically and ethnographically ; if one has a genius for those sciences, life will be infused into the shapeless mass, and that form will be given to it, in which its individuality is most clearly expressed. If one has it not, the description will only make the same barren impression as a map, at the sight of which you think, so that country with the green boundary is Syria, and that with the red, Asia Minor ! I have it not ; therefore, Heaven preserve me from descriptions ! But, when I cast a look at this rich, sun-saturated country, when I inhale the aroma of its plants and of its air, when I sit up till late in its nights, which are softer and warmer than our days, I cannot help thinking, and yet I will describe it, even though I make nothing more of it than the country with the flower-wreath boundary.

In my letter of the day before yesterday, I pur-

posely abstained from saying anything about the first impression made by Beyrout; I wished to make myself a little better acquainted with this nature. However, as it is generally the case with me, the first impression is indelible, and I think it was more than the magic of the name and the place which enchanted me when I went upon deck on the morning of the 5th. The light tint of early morning, azure interwoven with silver, hung down from the vast sides of the Lebanon, and spread far and wide over the sea; and only the highest points of the mountains yet wore the crowns of gold brought them by the morning sun. On the shore lay the old dark town, composed of nothing but turrets and hovels, black as though it were in mourning; and sap-green plantations of mulberry-trees surrounded it and climbed the first eminences of the Lebanon.

By degrees, till the time for disembarking arrived, the sun, rising higher and higher, appeared above the mountains, and illumined the whole grand landscape. The majestic Lebanon was tinged with a gold-red, as if smiling at the sea. Upon its surface danced millions of gold spangles, and the waves gently rippled as though paying him a morning salutation. The green of the gardens was transformed, as it were, into emerald; and the turrets and terraces of the town received their share of the heavenly light—a somewhat golden tint. It now looked exactly like that butterfly which we call *Trauermantel* (mourning cloak) and which has a white border

around its black wings. So dark is and remains the town, while the glorious light encompasses it in every variety of forms.

The amiable wife of the Prussian consul-general called upon me a few hours after my arrival, and invited us to dinner. There I had an opportunity, on the very first day, of observing sunset from the finest point of view in Beyrout, namely her *liwan*. Here I saw the morning scene reversed. The house of the consul-general is situated about half a league from the town, on gradually rising ground, where there are many villas, amidst gardens and plantations of mulberry-trees. There you have the whole verdant wooded slope before you, down, quite down to the sea. Detached, cheerful-looking houses are scattered among the gardens; and it is only quite at the bottom of the hill, between these and the sea that you perceive something of the town. But the king of Syria, the Lebanon, reigns here too; for all this country is his, lies at his feet and in his bosom; and, as morning put a crown of gold upon his head, so evening threw a crimson mantle over his shoulders, and he glowed so radiantly before and after sunset as I have seen only the snow-capped peaks of Switzerland glow. The Lebanon, however, has no such cap of snow, and consequently the landscape wanted something of its highest perfection—everlasting snow above the plants of a tropical climate. In the spring, when the winter's snow is still lingering on the mountain-tops, while the plain is already

hotly clothed with luxuriant vegetation, the view must be perfectly beautiful. But now the scorching summer sun has consumed the snow.

Such was the first day at Beyrout. Exquisitely beautiful, was it not? And such was the second, and the third, and the fourth day, and such would be every day, if one were to pass all one's days here. You sit in the *liwan* in the day-time, on the terrace, that is, on the flat roof, in the evening, and contemplate the sea and the mountains in sun-light and moon-light; and, at times, when it is not too hot, you take a ride to the palm-wood and admire the magnificent trees, and enjoy the scent of the acacia, the genuine, that is, which is almost overpowering. This wood is the pride of Beyrout. Palms form its crown; beneath their tall stems flourish large plantations of mulberry-trees, of which the greatest care is taken, because the breeding of silkworms is assiduously prosecuted. Hence this is the predominant tree of the country, intermixed with carob-trees and fig-trees, with palms and pines. These latter lift their beautiful, tranquil, erect heads into the air, and the others form the underwood, so that a wood has a rich and magnificent character.

This, however, does not prevent you from sinking, just outside the gates, into sand a foot deep, which renders walking most fatiguing and unpleasant, especially as, the moment you leave the sea, you find yourself between cactus-hedges as high as houses, which surround the gardens. This plant needs

little water, and therefore grows here to a monstrous size; every other vegetable production is reared by attentive irrigation. Every consideration gives way to that, and so the roads are turned into canals, and rendered impassable by banks, thrown up whenever water is more or less wanted here or there. Where no care is taken to irrigate, nothing grows; and where no plants grow sand grows. From year to year it spreads further and further; it advances insensibly but steadily, so that, after a series of years, large tracts are discovered to be inundated with sand. These encroachments might be prevented by plantations; but these are not made. The Turk sits with his hands on his lap, smokes his tchibook, and says "Kismeth!" which is equivalent to Fate, and which makes him quite easy about all the sand-inundations in the world. In my eyes the land, the willing, beneficent feeder of the human race, is a thing which, though I possess no more of it than a bird on the house-top, deserves to be held in respect and honour. It grieves me to see it neglected, so that it cannot show its powers, cannot bestow its treasures, especially here, where a paradise might flourish.

What air! Every inhalation is an enjoyment, and penetrates deeper than the bosom; it penetrates the soul and disposes it to cheerfulness. Here every thing is light. When you go abroad, you need not carry with you any cloak against your return in the evening; if you do not like to walk in the sand, you



mount a quiet nimble donkey, and ride off to dinner. I have chanced to come just at a most lovely time, that of the full moon. It is so bright that you may distinguish the colour of objects, and it does not make them appear black; and then the soft warm air! —and the night is really like day without sun. On the first evening, when I rode back from the consul-general's to the town, between ten and eleven o'clock, I had, according to European custom, taken a cloak along with me; but I put it off, and have not encumbered myself with it since.

There is a moment, just when the sun is about setting, when it is comparatively cool, and when the air is said to be injurious, so that you must cover your head. Later in the evening, the warm temperature returns; and in summer, the difference between the warmth of day and night is said not to exceed one, or, at most, one degree and a half of Reaumur. It seems, therefore, to me impossible to take cold. Still all strangers who make any stay are ailing at first; for the climate stirs up the blood too violently, and excess in regard to diet is punished much more severely than with us.

Beef there is none; it is too heavy, and therefore not wholesome. The mutton is excellent, only very fat; and you must, therefore, be cautious of that too. Fowls are quite innocent, and so are small wild birds about half the size of larks, which are a very favourite dish. Of our garden vegetables there are few or none: on the other hand, rice and tomatoes

constitute part of every meal. The latter are, in reality, the potatoes of the East; as indispensable, at least, if not so nourishing. They belong also to the class of the nightshades; their botanical name is *solanum lycopersicum*, vulgarly, love-apple. They have a brick-red colour, which they communicate to any dishes to which they are used as sauces, or in other ways.

The fruits in season are splendid grapes, and bananas or pisang. I remember that, while I was a child, some bananas having been once brought to maturity in the hot-house at Remplin, a few of them were given to me, and with a certain solemnity, as something very extraordinary. Since that time I had neither seen nor eaten any; but I still recollected that they tasted very mealy and insipid. I recognized the pale yellow fruit as soon as I saw it, and was desirous to taste it; but I found it just as juiceless and flavourless at Beyrout as at Remplin; and I was told that a person must get accustomed to it to like it. The best bananas are said to be grown lower down on the coast of Syria, near Saida, the ancient Sidon.

I am not telling you all this, my dear mother, for the purpose of giving you my bill of fare, but to convey to you some idea of the country, where bananas grow upon the trees instead of apples and plums; such is the nature of this country. The town—yes, indeed, that is very far from agreeable, and, with the exception of its capital pavement, composed of large flag-stones, it has

nothing to recommend it. The first entry into it is tumultuous enough. The boat cannot get to the shore for the sand. When it is coming from the steamer and approaching the land, a troop of half naked Arabs go to meet it, plunging into the water, seizing the trunks, laying hold of the passengers, and carrying them in their arms, if not very softly and conveniently, yet quite safely, through the waves. Then ensues, as in every other country in the world, a warm altercation about the transport of the luggage, and at length you set out for Battista's *locanda*, passing through the most singular streets that I ever beheld, for they are more like cellars and subterraneous passages than the streets of a town—so narrow and dark are they, even where they are not overarched from one house to another. At first, I conceived that all these archways were preparatory to the entrance into the town itself: but no! they are so contrived as a protection against the sun.

The individual houses are just as singular, consisting of quadrangular turrets, flat at top, of unequal height and area, which are united by stairs, bridges, and terraces. Every house looks like a little fortress, or a *donjon*, and to this gloomy impression the rarity of windows, the grating before them, and the dark colour of the stone, of which they are built, contribute. The interior of my *locanda* also is not much more cheerful than a prison. In the pitch-dark rooms on the ground-floor I have not looked about much, for there is the culinary department, from

which you do well to turn away your eyes. You ascend the narrow, steep staircase, and find yourself all at once in the open air, on the flat roof of a cavern-like sub-structure, above which the turrets rise quite irregularly. In every turret there is a lower and upper room; there is no such thing as a suite of rooms, or only two connected together—which, according to our notions, is most inconvenient. Between two of the turrets is placed the *liwan*. The open space in the middle, over which is spread a tent-like cover of canvas, serves for dining-room. The whole somewhat reminds you of the arrangement of the ancient houses of Pompeii, and the present style of building in Granada and Seville, if you will but indulgently compare that open space with the *atrium* of the ancients and the *patio* of the Andalusians. I have an apartment in the upper story of a turret, which has monopolized all the windows that ought to be in the others: it has six. Two look towards the street, and are closely grated with bars of old pine-wood, which gives out an agreeable, strengthening scent; two others look towards the vacant space belonging to the house, and are half grated; and the two others open upon a terrace, where cats amuse themselves, and are every moment poking their heads through the broken panes and drawing them back again, scared at my presence. Against the fourth wall of the room stands my bed, and there is also the door, which has neither lock nor key, nothing but a plain, though colossal bolt, so

that it cannot be fastened at all outside. I have fellow-inmates of my apartment in formidable spiders, whose nets seem to have been spread for these dozen years. You know how alarmed I used to be on account of such companions, my dearest mamma. Well, I have already so accustomed myself to them, that I pacify myself with the idea. In Europe I will be alarmed again at spiders, not here ! For the rest, I ought to thank Heaven that there are not scorpions or centipedes in such a room ; and this reflection makes me more indulgent towards the spiders.

The tops of the turrets are beyond dispute the most agreeable places. They are quite flat, and you climb up to them upon swaying ladder-like stairs, you have chairs, brought and you seat yourself, because walking is not pleasant at that height, since the platform has no parapet, and you enjoy the cool evening breeze.

I cannot help thinking of the rocks of Adersbach, when I see from above all the black, shapeless buildings around me, and at bottom the narrow dark zigzag streets. All Beyrout looks as if itself and its streets were hewn out of a rock.

In the evening, people are merry enough here. It is still their Ramadan, when the day is so silent and tedious, and they try to sleep it away, that they may suffer the less from the rigid fast. At sunset, as soon as the muezzin has summoned to evening prayer from the minaret, booms the gun that gives the wished-for signal for recruiting exhausted bodies

and souls : the coffee-houses are opened ; the vendors of fruit and bread bring their goods ; in the streets, as in the houses, people eat, smoke, and that not quietly as at other times, but with that extravagant joyousness which abstinence begets. You hear children shouting with delight, singing the monotonous music of the tambourine. On Friday there is military music at the pasha's. From our turret we overlooked his court, illuminated with torches, and had the music at first hand. It was hideous—a combination of discords, which each player produced arbitrarily, out of time and out of tune. On the roofs of the houses appeared women like ghosts, muffled up, according to the custom of this country in a wide, thick, *white* veil, to hear the concert. There was something of the lower world, and at the same time something excessively pleasing in the whole scene. The black buildings, the horrible music, and the glare of the torches, reminded me of the waltz of the devils in *Robert le Diable*, and belonged to the lower world ; while, in a higher region, the silent, white, female forms were at home ; the garlands of lamps which illuminated the gallery of the minarets flung down a softened radiance ; and lastly, the moon, in diamond brilliancy, flooded with her unearthly rays the earthly light as well as the earthly darkness.

The merriment lasts till late at night, and my six windows cause me to have a much larger share of it than I like : through these penetrates the noise

from the street, through those the illumination of a very near minaret, and through the last pair, the gossip of the women or the mewing of the cats, who seem alternately to visit that terrace. At sunrise, all is silence again. The twenty-third night of Ramadan is an important moment for every Mohamedan. It is the night *al Kadr*, the night of glory, in which the angel Gabriel brought down the Koran from the seventh heaven. On that night, the fate of all mortals during the coming year is decided and fixed—as the Jews are said to believe concerning New Year's day.

Ten in the evening.

As we set out to-morrow morning for Damascus, I will tell you, in all haste, that I am just returned from an Arabian dinner and an Arabian wedding. The former was Europeanised, at least in the form, for it took place at the house of the Austrian consul-general, who has a genuine Arabian cook from Cairo, and who gave me this treat. The dishes were all named to me, but my ear does not retain sounds to which I am not accustomed; therefore all I can say about them is that very strong spices predominated in them all.

Inquiry was then made at the house of the tradesman where the wedding was about to be held, if we could have permission to be present, and, as an affirmative answer was of course returned, we went thither. A wedding always has something con-

strained, something unpleasant; the new-married couple get tired of the tumult; and the guests know not in reality why they should be so excessively merry. But to the tortures of an Arab wedding, those of a European one make no approach. The marriage ceremony was performed about noon, according to the ritual of the Greek Church—for the Arabs, natives of the country, are not all Mohame-dans, but belong also to the different Christian confessions, and the latter are said to be very numerous here in Beyrout. After the ceremony, the bride is conducted to one room, and the bridegroom to another; she, surrounded by all her female relations and friends, and he, in like manner, by all those of his own sex; and there, parted from one another, they are entertained with music, singing, dancing, conversation, visits, meat, and drink—no longer than three days and three nights. What say you to this colossal faculty of amusement? I must confess that I am quite stunned by the half-hour's visit.

The house was in precisely the same style as my locanda, but the noise resounded far away in the dark street, as if it were a palace, with a thousand guests. I had to pass through the dark ground-floor, and up the dark stairs to the open inner space. There I was received by the master of the house, a cousin of the fatherless bride's, a handsome young man, whom the Oriental dress, especially the large turban, became extremely well; and he led me by the hand to the apartment of the females. When I



entered, they rose from the sofa, which, broad and low, runs along the walls; but so as not to stand upon the floor but upon the cushions; and the bride, who sat exactly opposite to the door, was supported in this difficult evolution by two of her neighbours, because etiquette requires that she should move as little as possible. I was conducted to her, seated beside her, and I surveyed this remarkable image. Image indeed! for the poor bride looked just like a doll. She must not stir, nor speak, nor look at any one, nor move a feature, nor lift up an eye; and, to make sure of the latter, they rub her eye-lashes with a viscous preparation which absolutely glues them together. Her eyebrows are arched and stained black, her cheeks red. Not only have the fingers ochre-yellow nails, but the hands are permanently tattooed with arabesques of a dark blue colour. In short, if this bride were to be given up at three days' end to a European, his first words to her must infallibly be, "Wash yourself, my angel!" Her hair descends in braids and loose stripes—false mixed with her own—over her shoulders; and flowers, ribbons, and shining ornaments are wound round the *turbush*, as the red cap with blue tassel is here called. This head-dress is not ungraceful.

The rest of the dress is such as I have described it when in Constantinople, only the gowns are without trains; and thick, variegated shawls, bound round the waist by way of belt, give the figure an

incredibly clumsy appearance. The necklace of the bride was composed of strings of small gold coins, so that she seemed to wear a gold breast-plate.

There she sat in this heavy dress, stiff and motionless, with pendent arms, more like a mummy than a living creature—least of all like a joyous bride. Should marriage prove a galling yoke to her, she might have foreboded its oppression from this commencement. For the rest, whether the statue-like movelessness, to which she is condemned, is meant to denote regret for her lost virgin state, indifference towards her wedded condition, or maiden bashfulness—for this singular formality must be a symbol of something—she most certainly knew not herself.

The other females were more or less decorated and painted like the bride ; therefore, I am not able to say whether any one of them was handsome. Their eyes were not glued together, but wide open, and the dark pencilling about them made them look ghastly to me. An eye, to please me, must above all things look at me honestly, and not, as it were, from under a mask. So far, I like the fiery Spanish eyes infinitely better than the highly vaunted oriental.

Strangers of the other sex also were admitted into this room, which was lighted by a large three-beaked lamp, that stood in the middle of the floor. To my regret, there was neither singing nor dancing ; therefore I abridged my visit to the bride, to pay one to

the bridegroom, who was confined in another turret by Arabian nuptial etiquette. On the sofa, among all the men, would not have been a suitable place for me; so I took a chair opposite to the bridegroom, and then the music which we had already heard when in the street began afresh. In one corner of the room, on the floor, were seated the musicians; one drummed on a pair of kettle-drums, of the circumference of a plate; another struck the dulcimer; the third belaboured a small stringed instrument, and at the same time all of them sang with all their might, in tones the most inharmonious that ever issued from human throats. Savage shouts alternated with nasal and guttural sounds—it was an execrable concert!

We stopped a short time and then proceeded to what may properly be called the drawing-room, the open room, where we were treated to excellent lemonade, and tchibooks or nargilehs were offered to the gentlemen. And so the entertainment ended for me, and I was heartily glad that I was not obliged, like the other guests, to stay till the day after tomorrow. My nerves are strong enough for hardships—not for diversions. Farewell, and good night, my dearest mother!

## LETTER XX.

TO MY SISTER.

Brief sketch of the History of the Caliphs.

Beyrout, October 9th, 1843

My dear Clara, ever since six o'clock I have been in readiness to start, *en costume de gamin*, the riding-whip in one hand, my hat in the other, expecting from minute to minute the signal for departure. It is now half past seven: the four riding-horses are, it is true, saddled; but of the three pack-horses, not one has yet arrived, and I am just informed that we shall breakfast here, and then make one stage of it to our quarters for the night. We breakfast at ten; so I have plenty of time to write to you, and I will employ it to the best advantage, my dear Clara, and tell you something about the history of the caliphs, to one of whose residences, the ancient far-famed Damascus, the "paradise-scented Scham," as the Arabs call it, I am now bound. For the history of men and nations interests you, God be thanked! for that is a sound and healthy taste, which sets the head to rights when ready to turn round, dizzy with all the hollow scribbling of our days. Should I be interrupted, it will not signify: it is equally annoying in any other letter, if we cannot proceed to the conclusion in the same mood in which we set out; but as

no particular mood is requisite for this, I can begin it to-day and finish it, for what I care, a year hence.

Of the most celebrated residences of the Arabian Caliphs, two are in the East, Damascus and Bagdad, one in Africa, Cairo, and one in Europe, Cordova. Mecca and Medina are the holy cities of Islamism; it was only in the very earliest times that they were the seat of the caliphs. Mohamed was born at Mecca in 569, of the tribe of the Koreish, and of the family of Hashem, which latter had the custody of the Kaaba and the presidency of the republic of Mecca. The *black stone* in the Kaaba was regarded by the Arabs as the most sacred of objects; it fell, according to tradition, a ruby, from heaven, throwing over all Arabia the radiance of the morning dawn; but, through the sins of men, the light expired, and the brightness of the ruby was drowned in the darkness of coal. Oh Clara! methinks every human heart is a little Kaaba, in which the ruby is liable to be transformed into coal. But are not an all-comprehensive truth and an all-penetrating poetry contained in the few words of this tradition?

Ishmael, from whom the Arabs are descended, as they assert, built the Kaaba, and Abraham and the angel Gabriel assisted him in the work. The Arabs had sunk into idolatry, and, till his fortieth year, Mohamed left the great idea of an only spiritual and eternal God to ripen within him, before

he promulgated it, and endeavoured to impart a better knowledge to his countrymen. I have sometimes heard him called a false prophet; this is unjust: no Mohammedan calls Moses, David, to say nothing of Christ, a false prophet; and with as good right might Zoroaster and Confucius be so called, but which they never are. Ought envy to mingle with the hatred against Islamism? You find in the *Koran*: "Righteousness consists not in turning your face to the east and the west in prayer, but he is righteous who believes in God, and in the last day, and in the angels, and in the scriptures, and in the prophets, and gives cheerfully of his substance to kindred, to orphans, to the poor, to pilgrims, and generally to all who ask for it; who sets the prisoner at liberty, who is punctual in prayer, who bestows alms, who patiently endures affliction and adversity, and the dangers of war—he is righteous, he is truly pious." It is far from these doctrines to the divine sermon on the Mount; but there is nothing false in them.

It was not till the year 609 that Mohamed proclaimed his doctrines: he found zealous adherents and zealous persecutors. The latter he resisted till 622; he then perceived that nothing but flight could save him. He fled to Medina, with his friend and father-in-law Abubekr; this is the Hegira, from which the Arabs commence their era. Mohamed lived ten years longer as a priestly and military ruler, and during that period subjected

all Arabia to his law. He died on the 7th of June, 632.

Under his successors, the first of whom was Abubekr, with the title of Caliph, commenced the long series of conquests achieved by the irresistible impetuosity of the Arabs, whose religion took root wherever their sword established itself. The Persian monarchy of the Sassanides was overthrown, under King Jezdegerd, by the Arab general Said, in 651. At an earlier period, in 640, Amru had conquered Egypt, which was a province of the empire of Byzantium, and like that empire, Christian, but so rent by sects and heresies, by dissensions and persecutions, that the majority of the inhabitants, the Copts, chose rather, with their heterodox creed, to submit to the yoke of Islamism than to that of orthodoxy. The emperor Heraclius was incapable of defending the fine rich country, and so Syria fell an easy prey to the Arabs.

But their victories and triumphs carried them beyond all bounds, so that they lost their equilibrium at home, and not more than thirty years after Mohamed's death fell into schism and sanguinary civil war. At an earlier period, in an expedition against the Beni Mosstallack, Ayesha, Mohamed's wife, and the daughter of Abubekr, was lost one night while on march with the son of Ssafwan, which furnished evil tongues with a fertile theme for satire. When Mohamed asked his four faithful followers, Abubekr, Omar, Othman, and Ali, (his

son-in-law,) their opinion of this adventure, the three former expressed themselves thoroughly convinced of Ayesha's innocence; Ali did not. It was requisite that the twenty-fourth Sura, that of the Light, should come from heaven, to testify in her favour, and against Ali and all sneerers. He had nevertheless his adherents, who were called Shii, that is heretics, by whom those who implicitly believed were denominated Sunni, or true believers.

In the sanguinary contest for the Caliphate, which Ali waged with Moawyah, of the house of the Ommyades, the Shii rallied around the green standard of the former, the Sunni around the white one of the latter. Religious dissension was combined with political, and it subsists to this day; the Shii predominating in Persia, where Shah Ishmael with his family, the Saffi, introduced their doctrine in the beginning of the sixteenth century; and the Sunni in the Turkish empire.

The Ommyades proved victorious, and Moawyah transferred the seat of the Caliphate to Damascus. His successors sunk amidst the debaucheries of their palaces; but the nation, whose energies were steeled by the tribulations and perils of warfare, prosecuted its conquests under great commanders. The whole north coast of Africa, including ancient Carthage, was subjugated before the end of the century, and, in the beginning of the next, Tarikh



commenced the conquest of Spain. Musa completed it in 713.

The Caliphs, regardless of the improvement of the people, sought not to open for the exertion of their aspiring energies any other channels than the savage and blood-stained ways of war; hence a revolution was inevitable. Abul ben Abbas invited the Caliph Merwan II. and his family to a grand banquet at Damascus, and caused them to be put to death. One member of it only escaped to Spain, continued faithful to the Ommyades, and acknowledged Abdurrahman as the true Caliph. He made Cordova his residence in 755.

The Abassides could not maintain their footing in the place where the preceding dynasty had been so cruelly exterminated. In 750, Al Mansur II. began to found Bagdad, and the black banner of the Abassides soon floated over the splendour of the new residence, which, more especially under Haroun al Raschid, from 786 to 809, became, not merely by the highest pomp of wealth and power, but by the everlasting glory of intellectual cultivation, a sun of the East which threw his rays into the far West. Under him the Arabs made as great progress in literature and the sciences as they had previously done in their military career; and, from their astronomers, physicians, and philosophers, Europe, still barbarous, began to derive knowledge.

The foreign conquests were too hastily made to

be consolidated; besides, very few of the Abassides possessed the sagacity and the wisdom of Haroun al Raschid: they first enervated themselves, then those about them, and lastly the people, who imitated the great in debauchery; and they could not prevent distinct provinces of the empire from becoming independent kingdoms; such as that of the Edrisites in Fez, of the Soffarides in Persia, of the Fatimites in Egypt, and others in Africa and Chorazan. By degrees their rule in Bagdad became merely nominal, and their Emir-al-Omra had the real military power in his hands—nearly in the same way as the Major domo of the Frankish Merovingians—till the Turcoman leader, Togrul Bey, of the tribe of the Seldjukes, came conquering and made himself sultan in the Syrian provinces of the Caliphat. His relation, Suleiman, founded in 1073, the kingdom and dynasty of the Seldjukes of Rum, and ruled from the Euphrates to the Bosphorus. The dynasty of the Abassides was no more, and that of the Seldjukes fell, with the whole monarchy, before the Mongol prince, Jenghis Chan, at the commencement of the fourteenth century.

All these torrents of invaders spread themselves over Syria, and for this reason I mention them; for the Caliphat was by this time transferred to Egypt, where, from the beginning of the tenth century, the Fatimites, descended from Ali and Mohamed's eldest daughter Fatima, reigned independently. They conquered Syria in 969, but made Masr-el-

Kahirah, the present Cairo, their residence. They defended, lost, and recovered from the Crusaders Palestine, and all the petty kingdoms which these had founded in the East. The great Saladin, of the house of Eyub, the famous and high-spirited adversary of the crusader-kings, was sultan of Egypt—for this title was now substituted for the ancient one of Caliph, and Syria, ever since united with Egypt, was conquered, in 1517, by the Turkish sultan Selim I. and divided into several pashaliks of the Sublime Porte.

Mehemed Ali recently made the attempt to reunite it with Egypt but the great European powers have taken the old infirm dynasty of the Turkish empire under their protection, and preserved Syria for it; probably it is less dangerous than a new one, which, of course, has always more of the enterprising spirit of youth. Be this as it may, three years ago Ibrahim Pasha was obliged to evacuate Syria, and the Turk vegetates, as sovereign of the country, over the Tyre and Sidon of the Phœnicians, over the ruins of Baalbec, the Roman city of the Sun, over the paradise-scented Damascus of the Ommyade Caliphs, and over the Jerusalem of the Christians. These places I shall now see, and first Baalbec, to which a journey of two days and a half will bring us.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.





